INEQUALITIES AT WORK: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE GARMENT INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA

Panangalage Dona Hemamalie Dias Gunatilaka

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Women and Gender Studies

Centre for the Study of Women and Gender

Department of Sociology

University of Warwick

May 2018

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

BOI - Board of Investments

ED - Executive Director

FTZ - Free Trade Zone

HRM - Human Resource Management

MD - Managing Director

Acknowledgement

My personal experience of the inequality of a woman in general and a working woman in particular is the trigger of my study. With the intention of shedding light ona grey area which I thought has negative effects on women I studied the capitalist labour processes in the garment factories in Sri Lanka. This challenging endeavour is not my own achievement but a collective effort of many individuals and institutions and I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all of them for inspiring, promoting, influencing and even supporting me in numerous ways.

In particular, I am extremely grateful to my supervisors, Professor Nickie Charles, Director, Centre for Women and Gender, University of Warwick, UK and Dr Carol Wolkowitz, Reader, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, UK for their invaluable academic contribution, generosity and understanding without which this research will not be in fruition.

Views of the respondents are the spirit of my study and I am indebted to them for sharing their personal experiences at work and at home, that enabled me to go to greater heights in understanding the inequalities at work. They deserve an individual acknowledgement for spending their valuable time in the middle of their *targets* but I am honour bound by ethico-political reasons and only say thank you ever so much.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Professor S U K Ekarathne and Professor Narada Warnasuriya for being the referees of my application to the doctoral degree program at the University of Warwick, UK. I mention with gratitude, Dr H M A Herath, Depatrment of Public Administration, University of Sri Jayewardenepura for his academic inputs and I note the contribution of Professor Maithree Wickramasinghe with appreciation.

I recall the guidance of Venerable Kirinde Assaji thero with great respect and I am grateful to Mr Saliya Wickramasooriya for his support and inspiration.

I am obliged to the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka and the National Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Sri Lanka for partially funding my tuition fee.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the owners of the three case study companies by permitting access, facilitating employee interviews and observations and spending time for an interview with me despite work schedules.

I mention with sincere gratitude my employer, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka for granting me overseas leave and to all my colleagues in the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce and of the Department of Business Administration for their unstinted support and encouragement.

I also wish to express my grateful thanks to Dr Caroline Wright and Dr Lynn Pettinger, academic staff members of the Department of Sociology, University of Warwick for their contribution in upgrading my work to PhD candidature and for their invaluable suggestions. I thank the head, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick and all the academic staff for their generous contributions including funding my field work. Janet Smith, Research & Department Secretary deserves a special word of appreciation for being exceptionally kind in dealing with administrative matters. My colleagues of the doctoral program deserves a special thank you for being with me throughout sharing, inspiring as well as supporting me when most needed. Reva, Tong, Heidi, Sara, Elsa, Demet, Divinya, Cong and Erika thank you very much.

I am exceedingly, grateful to Iresha, Kamal, Dinadi and Minadi, for their support during my stay in the UK. Thank you ever so much Iresha for being an understanding and a supportive friend. We inspired each other and we both successfully completed the journey.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Shrinika who left us before I complete the thesis, Dileepa, Dissa, Champa, Dhammika, Hemantha, Shantha, Jeevani, Seedevi, Srinath ayya, Nalin, Nalinda, aunty Doreen, Mrs Manuratne, Swarna akka and late Anura ayya, Madara and Bimal, Ranjan, ayya and Shamalee, Wasnatha ayya and Geetha akka, Anton Chandana and Disna, Shamalee and Devapriya ayya, Guna and Yaso, Guru and Rajee, Uditha ayya and Kumari akka, Nisansala and Kalana, Dhananjaya, Samanmalie, Fran, Thilini, Devika, Nirmala, Nayana and Nilmini, Aggra, Nirupa and Crishanthi and Manjula and Nalin for the unconditional support given in numerous ways.

Ms Savithri Hirimuthugoda, the Information Officer at Centre for Women's Research, Colombo, deserves a special word of thank for her kindness and patience in locating references.

I am exceedingly grateful to Sunethrani akka and Sampath ayya and Loku ayya and Chuti akka for their encouragement and unflagging support during difficult times.

I note with sadness my parents who left me while I was in the PhD journey, but who gave me their very best for the success of my education.

Finally I would like to express my love to my husband Jayantha and my son Jayamal for all their sacrifices, support and encouragement without which I could not have completed this project.

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

Abstract

This thesis considers some of the different forms taken by the intersection of social inequalities and exploitation in Sri Lankan garment factories. It identifies the organisational policies and practices that reproduce different 'inequality regimes' (Acker, 2006) in three case study garment companies, including inequalities of gender, class, ethnicity, religion, age and sexuality. These 'inequality regimes' also operate as 'factory regimes' (Burawoy, 1983), through which companies seek to generate worker productivity. Further, the thesis analyses the relation between women's domestic situations and their employment, showing how both are shaped by the wider Sri Lankan patriarchal social structure.

In order to understand the inequalities experienced by women at work the thesis mainly seeks to answer two research questions. The first research question asks about the nature of intersecting inequalities in the three case study organisations. The second research question relates to how women going to work in garment factories changes women's lives. This research question pays special attention to Elson and Pearson's (1981) three possible tendencies in the relationship between the emergence of women's factory employment and women's subordination. Methodologically, the research was based on semi-structured interviews with 36 male and female participants, including owners, managers and workers across three case study organisations, and observations in headquarters offices and three factories over nine months in 2014-2015. The research found that although all three case study organisations are located in the Sri Lankan garment industry, each case study organisation is typified by a highly distinctive inequality regime characterised by different mechanisms for maintaining or modifying wider inequalities and generating workers' consent: one a 'despotic regime', one a 'maternalistic regime' and one a 'pragmatic regime'. Each of these is associated with a degree of individual worker agency, but little collective resistance. The research also found that women's decisions to enter employment is influenced by the income level of their husbands or fathers. When household income is low women are more able to challenge familial patriarchal authority by taking up employment in garment factories. Women's contributions to household finances are associated with their families gaining status, women being involved in family decision-making and men contributing to domestic work.

Introduction

This thesis is a study of inequalities in the Sri Lankan garment industry. There are approximately 300 garment factories in Sri Lanka; women account for between 70% - 80% of the workforce in an industry which provides employment for around 300,000 employees. The garment industry contributes significantly to the economy of the country, for instance, export earnings from garment products account for 44% of the total export earnings of Sri Lanka. Although women contribute to the country's development to a greater extent, it is important to ask whether their significant contribution is valued as much as men's, whether their well-being is ensured in factories and whether they are treated with respect while at work. For example, in one factory in Sri Lanka, every day before work women workers sing the company anthem, wish the company long life and pledge that they will work their best. The anthem begins:

The place is serene and the name of the company is soothing……

I am interested in whether this is just a platitude or what might it signify when workers have to make a pledge and sing like this to a factory that is nothing like its portrayal in the anthem.

Against this backdrop, my interest in inequalities came from my own experience of inequality as an academicand as a women, in business management, in a Sri Lankan public university. Thus I was interested in the business world, and selected the garment industry as my focus because of the high participation of women and their importance in the industry.

To understand inequalities in the garment industry I framed my research questions as follows.

1. What inequality regimes characterise garment producing factories in Sri Lanka?

    (i) What are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?

(ii) What other factors affect the reproduction of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?

2. Is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan garment factories?

I decided to undertake a qualitative study of the inequalities experienced by women employees in garment factories in Sri Lanka. I undertook 3 case studies of organisations involved in the garment industry with factories outside the Free Trade Zones. My qualitative data are drawn from 36 in-depth interviews with 18 women and 18 men from the top, middle, supervisory and shop floor levels of my three case study organisations, including their head offices and one of their factories. I also undertook observations in these three organisations during my fieldwork. These organisations and their factories are in different locations including urban and rural, they produce different products for local and foreign markets, they are of different sizes and their ownership is different in terms of gender and ethnicity. I talked with 36 participants, both women and men, about their work life as well as family responsibilities. I purposely incorporated interviews with men, first as a comparison to women's experiences, and second to try to capture their viewpoints on women's work roles. Based on this study I aim to make women's exploitation visible andtheir voices heard.

My ontological stance is that gender is a social construction and my conceptual framework is mainly derived from the literature on reproducing inequalities and gender in manufacturing. Thus I use Joan Acker's (2006) concept of inequality regimes and Burawoy's (1983) of factory regimes to understand the reproduction of inequalities in garment factories. This will enable me to look at organisational policies and procedures that reproduce gender, class and other inequalities. I also use literature on gender and manufacturing, mainly the work of Elson and Pearson (1981), that studies the relationship between the emergence of factory work and its effects on women's life, particularly their relationship with patriarchal authority. I use these literatures to understand the effects of capitalism and patriarchy on women's lives when they are employed in global garment factories.

It is evident that women's employment challenges patriarchal norms; they have become the majority of employees in the garment industry and are also active

participants in other vital sectors of the economy, such as the tea industry. Thus women's decisions to enter or leave the labour market has implications for capitalists firms, especially garment factories, that depend heavily on women's cheap labour, and also has implications for patriarchal household relations.

Developing an understanding of how inequalities affect the lives of women is sociologically relevant both because of its theoretical analysis and its potential practical implications for women's lives. My study contributes to the wider academic debate on how inequalities are reproduced and challenged within organisations. It specifically contributes to the understanding of organisational policies and procedures that reproduce inequalities, how capitalism and patriarchy operate together and in tension with each other, and how women manage work and family responsibilities in the context of a patriarchal social structure.

I wish to position my study as a contribution to providing a sociological analysis of the reproduction of inequalities in the garment factories in Sri Lanka, a country in the global South. The study links women's paid work with their domestic obligations and looks at the role of culture and religion in explaining the constraints women face in managing their work while fulfilling family obligations. It contributes to knowledge through the close examination of the structure of organisations and the exploitation of women's labour which it generates. Going beyond women's employment I pay attention to how women manage family responsibilities while working in garment factories. The originality of the research is that it combines the conceptual tools of inequality regimes and factory regimes to understand the reproduction of inequalities in a factory setting. The findings are based on women's experiences of inequalities and men's viewpoints on women's subordination and experiences of inequalities.

The thesis is structured in the following way. The first chapter discusses the existing literature on gender and manufacturing in the third world, and the concepts that have been used by scholars of the global North to analyse inequalities and women's positioning in large organisations.

Chapter two identifies the particular inequalities of Sri Lankan society which might be relevant to understanding inequalities in manufacturing organisations in Sri Lanka. I look at the growth of the garment industry in detail and then women's contribution

to the economy as a whole. I also explore the social divisions characterising Sri Lankan society, especially social class, ethnicity and religion, and women's positioning within these social divisions. Finally I discuss the social significance of patriotic symbols and practices including the particular roles women play in patriotic ceremonies.

Chapter three explains my research design. It is an account of how the research is carried out and the methodological underpinnings that have driven the analysis. In this chapter I present why I chose case study methodology and why I chose the three case studies in particular. I describe the methods I used to collect data namely, in-depth interviews and observations and examine the use of these tools as data collection methods within qualitative case study research. I reflect on the research process as a whole, the process of interviewing and the challenges I faced in positioning myself during fieldwork. I also explore the ethical issues raised by my research methods and the effects of my research on the participants.

Chapters, four to eight are based on data collected in tape-recorded interviews and fieldwork diaries. Chapter four provides a detailed account of the settings of the three organisations with a textured description of their physical premises. I also look at aspects of the organisations such as management structure, gendered divisions of labour, and management and workers' earnings. Similarly, I also discuss the daily and annual routines present in the three factories, paying particular attention to ceremonial occasions.

Chapters five, six and seven present my analysis of the inequality regimes I identified in the three case study organisations. In chapter five I look at the largest company I studied which is owned by a Muslim family and has more than 10,000 employees. Chapter six is about a slightly smaller company that has around 6000 employees and is owned by a Sinhala, Buddhist widow. These two companies serve the international market. Chapter seven is about the smallest company I studied which is owned by a Tamil, Hindu man. It has about 40 employees and serves the local market.

Chapter eight focusses on how the participants manage their work and family lives; it highlights the way family-households shape participation in paid employment and explores the consequences, for women and their families, of women's paid

employment in a patriarchal society in which the respectability of women is highly valued.

I conclude the thesis in chapter nine by summarising the main research findings and explaining how they contribute to the literature on gender and manufacturing in the global South and the literature on inequalities at work. I also discuss the limitations of the study.

Chapter 1

Conceptualising Inequalities in Garment Production

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to put forward my understanding of the available literature on gender, and other inequalities of employment in global garment factories to which this thesis will be a contribution. In this chapter I will bring together the two main areas of literature this thesis addresses. These are, firstly, studies relating to gender in global manufacturing, and secondly, to the identification of different inequality regimes, including organisational processes and practices that result in, and maintain, inequalities within organisations. I begin with a discussion of the different approaches to studying gender in global manufacturing, especially studies relevant to the global garment industry. In the next section I will look at the centrality of gender and other forms of inequality in organisations and workplaces, as well as Acker's (2006) notion of 'inequality regimes', and some of the ways Acker's work has been used by other scholars. I then end the chapter by outlining my research questions in relation to the literature I have reviewed.

Gender and Manufacturing

In this section I look at the different perspectives people have used to study gender in global manufacturing, especially in the global garment industry, to show the different ways that key changes and developments have been understood. I focus in particular on developments in research which highlight, for instance, the feminisation of the manufacturing workforce, the increasing focus on workers' subjectivities and the spread of global value chains within which garment production now takes place.

In the globalized world economy women play a key role in the manufacturing sector (Ma, 2014). In the export-oriented industries of certain Asian countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and China, women account for nearly half of all manufacturing sector employees (Barrientos, Kabeer and Hossain, 2004; Bair, 2010; Williams et al, 2013) – although a bit less in Sri Lanka (Ranaraja, 2013).

Due to the attention paid by feminist and other social movements to sex/gender inequality in public life (Acker, 2004), considering gender as a significant aspect of

the production and distribution of manufactured goods was an initiative that arose in the 1960s and 1970s in the countries of the global South (Kabeer, 2004). In theorising gender some scholars were already critiquing a 'naturalistic' approach which bases gender on the biological characteristics of human beings. Increasingly studies 'de-naturalize' gender to consider it as a social institution, an attribute not so much of individuals but of a system of gender relations (Calás, Smircich, and Holvino, 2014) – and this is the ontological stance I take in this study. Gender inequality is arguably more complex today than in the 1960s and 70s, which is linked to changes in economic, cultural and political spheres due to globalisation and the expansion of neo-liberalism.

The large number of women entering global production in recent decades has led to scholars forming different conclusions about the implications for women. According to Hussain and Dutta (2014), the debate mainly consists of two camps. On one hand are those who argue that entry into manufacturing increases the exploitation of women (Frobel *et al.* 1979; Elson and Pearson, 1981), who work long hours for lower wages. On the other hand, others argue that women joining the manufacturing labour force gain certain advantages, such as more financial independence and increased decision-making power in their households (Oppong 1981; Bahr, 1974 cited in Dwyer and Bruce, 1988). A central question concerning global production is whether the globalisation of manufacturing benefits poorer countries, or whether it intensifies divisions and inequalities among and within countries(Chant and McIlwaine, 2009). It is also significant that scholars now observe the actions of multinational companies at the top of the global manufacturing process, and also the roles and choices of workers and managers in specific places and contexts and their scope for making decisions which affect their work lives as employers or workers (Williams *et al*., 2013).

Capitalism and Patriarchy

Against this backdrop, feminist theorists in the 1970s and 1980s argued that the inter-dependent relation between capitalism and patriarchy is at the heart of women's positions in global production. The majority of employees in the global factories that emerged at that time were women, including Sri Lanka. A very influential account by Elson and Pearson (1981) evaluated new possibilities and problems for women caused

by the employment of women in global factories, and explained these through the complex dependence of capitalist strategies on the patriarchal subordination of women as a gender. Many women worked in the Free Trade Zones (FTZs) that governments created, including Sri Lanka, where national laws on workers' rights were suspended, allowing employers to increase productivity without effective resistance. Elson and Pearson (1981) argued that global factories employed women, counter to the expectations of traditional gender norms in many countries, but that this neither made women equal nor necessarily led to their emancipation from family norms. Firms used the expectation that women were economically reliant on male breadwinners, and small family farms, to treat them as a secondary labour force that did not require a wage to support their families. Women were paid 20%-50% of men's wages in the same role, and seen as 'naturally' docile, 'nimble-fingered' and less inclined to join trade unions. The discriminatory treatment of women was justified by employers through the idea that women are naturally inferior workers because they are unable to continue in employment once they have children.

Elson and Pearson (1981) rejected the idea that the subordination of women is 'natural', but argued that gender subordination was intrinsic to gender construction processes in the world at the time. Thus, it was not patriarchal practices alone that produced gender subordination, as some feminists argued, nor capitalism, as some Marxists argued, but rather the intricate material processes which take place in daily practices, and which are rooted in both capitalism and patriarchy as structures governing the decision-making of companies and households. Capitalist labour processes use women's domestic obligations to allocate them to a secondary status in the labour market, and thereby cheapen the cost of labour. Indeed, the patterns found by Elson and Pearson (1981) are found worldwide, for instance in Fussell's (2010) study of maquiladoras in Mexico. Fussell considers women as suppliers of low-wage labour in developing countries due to the social construction of women as secondary wage earners. Employers are uninterested in attracting qualified workers with higher wages, but prefer employing the cheapest labour to enable them to compete globally. Global competition affecting multinational assembly plants has influenced the local labour market by reducing the earnings of women. Mies's (1982) research on export production in India, according to Bair (2011), showed that this occurs not only in multinational assembly plants. Capital can exploit women's labour not only in

factories but also in the home, where home-based production is incorporated into the production of goods destined for the world market.

I will argue that studying the intersection of capitalist processes and patriarchal norms and practices enables me to look at the experience of Sri Lankan employees and employers. This approach allows me to understand how capitalism piggybacks on patriarchy for profits within global production, and how it may also be using family structures to influence national policy making bodies and patriarchal cultural assumptions, for instance 'respectable' femininity might be integrated into employers' employment practices.

However, it will be necessary to give more attention to women's agency than Elson and Pearson's (1981) original article. Pearson (Jackson and Pearson, 1998) later challenged the overly general view that she and Elson had put forward regarding global trends in the employment of women in factories or the overarching patriarchal control of women by men, and came to recognise that the character of gender relations also depends on the specificities of gender relations in different places and the practices of local labour markets. Critiquing Pearson's earlier work with Elson (1981), Jackson and Pearson also comment that Elson and Pearson ignored the reformulation of specific gender identities within which women are active agents. They critiqued Elson and Pearson's earlier view on women's roles, which seemed to see them as passive recipients of the effects of capitalism and patriarchy rather than as actors capable of active resistance or collusion. They might also have given too much emphasis to wage costs. Caraway (2005) argues that the level of wages is only one influence on women's increasing participation in the labour force, since increasing participation is also due to managers looking at productivity and labour control through a gender lens. Sri Lankan factories operating within transnational production might depend on women's low wages for profit (Elson and Pearson, 1981), but women may also have been employed due to other factors, such as productivity and labour control (Caraway, 2005).

Elson and Pearson's (1981) original article identified three possible tendencies in the relation between the emergence of factory work and the subordination of women as a gender (which we might find still exists today). These were, first and second, 'intensifying' or 'decomposing' forms of gender relations and, third, 'recomposing'

new forms. These three concepts have been found useful as a way of talking about changes in gender relations.

Evidence of all three trends can be found in the global workplace. Feldman's (2009) study in Bangladesh points to the increasing pressures of achieving targets as an example of the 'intensification' of gender subordination due to patriarchal relations on the factory floor within the feminized labour market, particularly for export workers. In contrast, 'decomposing' women's subordination has occurred in Java, where women workers' autonomy increased along with their economic contribution to the household (Wolf, 1991, cited in Charles, 1993). Sri Lankan literature highlights a similar increase in employed women's influence on family decision-making (Hancock *et al*., 2011), which can be seen as a partial 'decomposing' of gender subordination. 'Recomposing' gender subordination has been seen in Taiwan, where young women going out to work were still expected to remain under the authority of their parents and, once working in factories, to repay their parents for having brought them up (Wolf, 1990 cited in Charles, 1993).

Cockburn (1983) also works with the idea of the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy, and links capitalism to a system of sex/gender relations and the recomposition of gender subordination. Her study of male compositors in the UK newspaper printing industry highlighted male workers' patriarchal craft culture, which enabled skilled men and their male-identified trade unions to marginalize women within the industry. Print unions feared that they would lose control of the labour process and male dominance of skilled jobs if women entered the industry. However, ultimately technological change challenged the power relations between unionised male, skilled compositors, employers and female labour. What eventually happened was a reorganisation of the gendered division of labour. Keeping women out of craft jobs was a struggle by men to maintain patriarchal control and advantage. According to Cockburn (1983) men had some control over the labour process only because employers agreed to it. This might not be as relevant elsewhere (outside of the UK), where employers might be less amenable to supporting men's superiority in the labour force, or where trade unions do not play such an important role in mediating the impact of technological change.

Creating Subjectivities

Although studies on gender in manufacturing were initially focused on how globalisation at the macro level affects women, later scholars became more interested in understanding how gendered activities and interests affect globalisation (Ngai, 2005). Bair (2010) argues that with the shift away from grand narratives and the emergence of postmodernism in feminist theory, studying subjectivities and identities rather than macro structures like capitalism and patriarchy became central to the study of gender inequality. Thus more attention began to be paid to active agency and the creation of subjectivities as an essential aspect of the reproduction of gender subordination and the possibilities for resistance. This continues a longer tradition of attending to women's agency, for instance Jackson and Pearson's (1998) recognition of the significance of the reformulation of specific women's gender identities and the ways in which women are active agents in the interaction between capital accumulation and traditional forms of gender identities. Cockburn's (1983) emphasis on creating gender identities and resistance, and Acker's (2006, 2012) attention to gender identities as products of organisational processes all emphasise the role of subjects' own agency in defining femininity and masculinity. Ong (1987, cited in Bair, 2010) and Wolf (1992, cited in Bair, 2010) were also attentive to subjectivity and agency in their studies on Malay and Javanese factories. They described capitalism as a system of social relations and a cultural configuration that intersects with local Malay and Javanese practices and understandings to produce specific manifestations of gendered work (cited in Bair, 2010).

An even stronger interest in creating subjectivities can be found in poststructuralist studies on gender in global factories. For instance, Salzinger (2003) adopted a post-structuralist, feminist approach to studying four export factories in Mexico. Her aim was to explain the ubiquity of what she calls 'the trope of productive femininity', that is the 'icon' of the docile and dextrous women worker (Salzinger, 2003 cited in Bair, 2010: 217), which Salzinger locates in discourse rather than family structures.

Salzinger argues that gendered subjectivities are created not just locally but on the shop floor, and that they occur differently in different factories. New subjects are created through discourse, and are more productive as they take on the expectations of management. However, Salzinger may be criticised for failing to identify linkages

between what happens in particular factories and in connection with wider socio-economic structures and practices. Thus, Bair (2010) argues that the construction of productive femininity, as highlighted by Salzinger, not only reflects the vision of transnational managers but also their placement within the larger structure of global capitalism. This link between local and larger global structures is essential to provide a satisfactory explanation about gendering in transnational production.

Studying the construction of new subjectivities and their relation to women's agency in Sri Lankan garment factories, Lynch (1992) identifies a 'newly traditional identity' through which rural women workers attempt to differentiate themselves from their urban counterparts, and to also prove themselves as morally 'good girls' despite being modern working women. In particular, women workers have to negotiate new identities in the face of what is perceived to be a clash between factory work and the maintenance of traditional female sexual morality. The celebration of 'good girls' symbolizes a conjuncture of nationalist and capitalist gender ideals. Thus the process of identity formation illustrates the profound impact of the local context and not just a global context in terms of worker subjectivities. According to Lynch ideals of respectability and feminine purity are particularly important in shaping gender subordination in Sri Lanka.Similarly, 'sense of place' and 'self-identities' among migrant women factory workers are explored in a study of workers in the Katunayake FTZ by Attanapola (2006). These women have developed positive self-identities within the factories by participating in social and political activities. Their contributions to family income are recognised by their families, where they gain respect, an example of the decomposition of gender subordination, although not conceptualised as such by the author.

Taking a similar approach to Salzinger's (2003) emphasis on the construction of subjectivities, but giving more weight to the structures of capitalism and patriarchy, Ngai's (2005) study of an electronics factory in China found that a newly embodied social identity emerged in these factories to meet the changing socio-economic relations of the country and the needs of capital. Post-structuralist researchers, like Salzinger and Ngai, focus on discourse, agency and subjectivity to highlight the significance of women's active participation in creating subjectivities which sometimes intensifies and sometimes modifies gender subordination within factories,

and this is important to fully understand gender relations in factories. But it needs to be combined with attention to wider structures, which some of these authors neglect.

Gunawardana (2014) found in Sri Lanka that while enjoying the Board of Investment restrictions on unionisation in line with global trends, managers permit internal, individualized voice mechanisms for voicing concerns of employees. Gunwardana discusses how some voice mechanisms are used by managers to address conflicts, absenteeism, etc. Women discuss their issues and grievances initially with their immediate supervisors and if not resolved, these proceed to other levels. She also notes how social relations such as respect embedded in gender hierarchies curtail women's voice in formal settings as a result of socialization within a patriarchal social structure.

Some studies have considered not just women's agency, but also how it might refract back onto developments in capitalist strategies of production. In particular, Carswell and De Neve (2013) have studied the practices and forms of agency rooted in people's everyday decision-making around employment, livelihood and social reproduction in garment factories in South India.Employees' everyday practices, though restricted by lack of material, social and human capital, try to turn things to their advantage and utilise the best option available to them. As a result of their decisions they enter or leave the labour market and sometimes move between work organisations. These practices have effects on daily factory functioning and may improve aspects such as their livelihood. Capital must in turn deal with labour agency through strategies to maintain the required workforce. Thus labour agency and capital's response can be understood as an iterative interaction (Carswell and De Neve, 2013).

Global Value Chains

Another approach to gender and manufacturing which has developed since Elson and Pearson's (1981) original article entails much greater attention to the global value chains which connect producers and consumers across the globe. This is because the scale and complexity of links across the globalised world have increased phenomenally, and scholars attempt to keep up with this through different studies looking at the variety of ways that women are integrated into global value chains, including through their reproductive labour in the family (Dunaway 2014), and why forms of integration develop in different ways. They are also concerned with where power lies in commodity chains, and how power constrains or empowers actors at

different locations in the chain. For instance as regards the global garment industry the term 'buyer driven' commodity chains (Gereffi, 1994) suggests that retail chains that obtain the goods they sell from factories in the South monopolise power. Within the global apparel industry, retailers and merchandisers play the leading role in setting up production networks, and the buyers or, in other words, the highly capitalised corporate giants hold the greatest power (Collins, 2003). There is also research on possible differences in the business success of women and men factory owners in the global South. For instance, Hodges *et al.* (2017) looked at entrepreneurship in the small apparel-related business sector in four countries and studied gender differences in the experience of owning and operating a global apparel business. They found that it was not gender, but in which country the entrepreneur was located that shaped their access to finance. Although women faced particular difficulties in hiring capable people to begin with, no significant gender differences were found among successful businesses that had survived earlier stages.

Carswell and De Neve (2013) suggest that analysts have given less attention to labour in commodity chains than to retailers or factory owners. Looking at labour at the tail end of the commodity chain means looking at the millions of women workers in the industry, whose fate is linked to the dynamics of the commodity chain (Collins, 2003). Similarly, garment producers in the global South, although geared towards high profits, are also squeezed by competing powers, such as the compliance requirements of buyers, severe competition among producers and the resistance of workers towards aspects including management decisions and relations at work. An example of such research isCrinis and Vickers (2016), who use global commodity chains, global production networks and global value chains as their analytical framework to study the forms taken by the internationalised organisation of the clothing industry.They describe the strategies of global garment firms as the 'informalization and dis-organisation'[1] of labour, and use case studies from different countries to highlight the

[1]Informalisation and dis-organisation refer to ways of removing employment practices and labour processes from scrutiny by governments and trade unions, and removing them from regulation, for instance by externalising production to other companies or countries. This may result in disempowering those organisations, especially trade unions,that have historically supported the collective interests of workers(Crinis and Vickers, 2016).

different policies, processes and actions that keep labour divided and therefore controlled.

One of the countervailing powers on the organisation of the clothing industry is pressure from consumers. According to Hale and Shaw (2001), ethical trading initiatives in the global garment industry are an outcome of public concern that questions major capitalist firms selling goods produced using exploitative labour. In response, many companies have developed codes of conduct to ascertain and, if necessary, establish labour standards in manufacturing firms based in the global South as compliance requirements. To understand ethical trading initiatives, Ruwanpura (2016) has studied how ethical codes of conduct shape labour practices in Sri Lankan garment factories, given that there are state controls on unionisation.

Conceptualising Inequalities

There are different ways of conceptualising inequalities in organisations to identify and understand inequalities in the garment industry in Sri Lanka. In this section I look at these different conceptualisations, including 'Gendered Organisation' (Acker, 1990), 'Gender Regimes' (Connell, 1994, originally published 1987; Acker, 1994), 'Inequality Regimes' (Acker, 1994) and 'Factory Regimes' (Burawoy, 1983). As we shall see, the first three of these concepts are connected. Acker's initial work on 'gendered organisations' was path-breaking in demonstrating that it was not just that women had difficulty rising in an organisation, but that they could not meet criteria that were designed around men's lives. Hence Acker came to see organisations as gendered rather than gender-neutral. When she came to look at differences among organisations she drew on Connell (1994 [1987]). Connell (1994 [1987]) identified gender inequalities in social institutions, such as family, state and street as well as work organisations; she conceptualised these in terms of gender regime. Acker (1994) adopted Connell's (1994 [1987]) concept of gender regime and, like her, identified a number of organisational processes and practices that produce and reproduce gender regimes in organisations. Acker (2006) later developed the concept of 'inequality regime' so as to focus on intersectional inequalities. In addition to these concepts I also incorporate Burawoy's (1983) notion of factory regime in my analysis. This is because whereas Acker (1990, 1994 and 2006) studied bureaucratic organisations, I am interested in inequalities occurring in factory production, and in organisations in

which capitalist employers organise employment practices and the production process around profit criteria. Burawoy (1983) studied the capitalist labour processes as a struggle between capital and labour over the employer's ways of organising work through exploitation of the labour force, and examined the relation between changes in political conditions and the labour process and factory regime. Thus in this section I explore these concepts to suggest how they might be used to study inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka.

Gendered Organisations

Acker (1990) views organisations as neither gender neutral nor asexual but gendered.

> To say that an organisation, or any other analytic unit, is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine (Acker, 1990: p. 146).

Writing in 1990, Acker argues that the assumption that the worker is a man, with a male body, sexuality, minimal responsibility in reproduction, and in control of his emotions, pervades work and organisational processes. Thus there is no way in which women can compete, since the terrain is gendered in the first place. Moreover, organisations stigmatise women's bodies, sexuality, reproductive ability, menstruation, etc., and use biological difference to justify the control and exclusion of women. Features of employment frequently noted, such as gender segregation or the glass ceiling, should not be seen in isolation, but rather as evidence of the gendering of organisations themselves, not only discrimination within them. Other scholars who have picked up on the idea of 'gendered organisations' include Yancey Martin and Collinson (2002). They question the use of traditional mainstream and critical organisation theories' ability to properly address gender in organisations, and propose that scholars enter into unknown and unexplored territories that would lead to the development of a new field of gendered organisations.

Acker has been criticised by Britton (2000) for assuming that all organisations are inherently gendered, and not distinguishing between different aspects of gender in organisation; for instance between the gender composition of the labour force and the values which govern relations within the organisation. Britton uses the example of women's prisons, which are largely staffed by women but which, she argues, are governed by masculinist values.

Gender Regime

The concept 'gender regime' was introduced by Connell (1994[1987]) in order to recognise forms of gender subordination in every social institution, such as family, state and street. Although not paying attention to feminist writing she highlights that at the time she began writing about gender, most of the writings on the classic themes of social science such as state, migration etc., demonstrated gender blindness. She argued that gender relations are present in all types of institutions and form a major structure of institutions.

> By the "gender regime" of an institution we mean the patterning of gender relations in that institution, and especially the continuing pattern, which provides the structural context of particular relationships and individual practices (Connell, 1994, originally published 1987, p. 6).

Wherever people are, gender relations are inevitably present. One institution may be differently gendered compared to another, due to its context and that of other related organisations. Thus, 'context' is significant in understanding the form taken by gendering in different institutions, for example a family that migrates experiences a change of context (Connell, 1987). Connell's four-dimensional model identifies the components of a gender regime in a social institution which is comprised of: the gender division of labour (how the relation between production and consumption are arranged), gender relations of power (how control, authority, and force are exercised), emotion and human relations (how attachment and antagonism among people and groups are organized) and gender culture and symbolism (how gender identities are defined in culture). A gender regime therefore combines these four elements and the distinctiveness of each is a conceptual tool to understand how social relationships are gendered.

Acker adopts Connell's (1987) concept of gender regime, and for Acker (1994) the term gender regime means the ways that gender is integral to organisational processes at a particular time, in a particular organisation. Like Connell, she identifies a number of organisational processes and practices that produce and reproduce gender inequalities, but is concerned only with organisations and, within them: the construction of gender divisions, the construction of gendered images and symbols, the enactment of gendered dominance and submission, and the gendering of individual identities and underlying assumptions and practices that construct most contemporary

work organisations. In an empirical study in the late 1980s of Swedish banks Acker (1994) investigated how the reorganisation of branches had in some cases enhanced, and in others reduced, gender inequality.

Inequality Regimes

Just as Acker expanded her concept of gendered organisations to include other forms of inequality, she later tried to incorporate other kinds of inequality into her understanding of the regimes that govern organisational employment, through the concept of 'inequality regime'. This makes it more useful for studying employment in global manufacturing, since it can capture some of the inequalities between workers and managers that are not based on gender. Acker's (2006) concept of 'inequality regimes', I would argue, enables us to look systematically at how gender and other inequalities are challenged, modified or reinforced in organisations like garment factories. This also enables us to identify the differences and variations between production units even in the same country, which Salzinger (2003) says can vary.

Acker defines inequality regimes as:

> loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organisations (Acker, 2006: p. 443).

The concept of 'inequality regimes' is a response to the feminist focus on intersectionality, because it tries to grasp the relationships between multiple forms of social inequality and how different types of discrimination such as gender, race and class interact (Crenshaw 1989; Bradley 2006; Walby, 2009). Contemporary thinking on intersectionality was developed by black feminist theorists whose central concern was the invisibility of black women in studies of gender. For instance, Collins (1986) argued that white and black American women experienced gender very differently. Similarly for Crenshaw (1991) the location of women of colour at the intersection of race and gender make their experience qualitatively different from white women's, and this is explained in terms of structural intersectionality. Similarly Anthias and Yuval Davis (1982) argue that:

> Race, gender, and class cannot be tagged onto each other mechanically for, as concrete social relations, they are enmeshed in each other and the particular intersections involved produce specific effects (cited in Healey, Bradley and Forson, 2011: pp. 62–63).

Intersectionality as a framework now features in many studies of workplace divisions and inequalities (Williams *et al.*, 2013). As pointed out by Choo and Ferree (2010), it is possible to conceptualise intersectionality in different ways and to use different methodologies to examine it empirically. Discussing how the concept of inequality regimes responds to the challenge of studying intersectionality, Acker (2006) says that women are not only women but they are in an intersectional position of difference in relation to social class, ethnicity, race and so on. In her later work, Acker (2012) continued to argue that gendered processes do not stand alone, pointing out that gender intersects with and is shaped by race, class and other forms of inequality and exclusion.

Besides capturing the intersectionality of women's positioning, Acker (2006) also addresses Britton's (2000) criticisms of the concept of gendered organisations. She does this by stressing that inequality regimes in organisations do not operate in isolation but they are linked to inequalities in the larger society. Acker (2006) recognises that organisational inequalities are related to the history, politics and culture of the wider society. A good example of this recognition is seen in Healey (2010), who also stresses that the relations between majority and minority groups within organisations are related to wider inequalities. Hence they may change as the wider society changes. Also, Acker now recognises that one cannot necessarily see every organisation as unequal in the same way. She says that 'Organisations vary in the degree to which these disparities are present and in how severe they are' (Acker, 2006: p. 443).

This addresses the major criticisms that were levelled against Acker by Britton (2000) about the concept of gendered organisations. I suggest that Acker (2006), by implying that there is a difference in the degree to which disparities are present in different organisations, takes into consideration the fact that inequalities are not inherent in organisations but may differ due to the context in which organisations are operating. As I discuss later, Acker came to see globalisation as a crucial aspect of organisational context.

Characteristics of Inequality Regimes

Acker (2006) identifies six different characteristics of inequality regimes. These are: (i) Bases of inequalities; (ii) The shape and degree of inequalities; (iii) Organising processes that produce inequalities; (iv)The invisibility of inequalities; (v) The

legitimacy of inequalities; and (vi) Controls that produce compliance and prevent protests against inequalities.

These characteristics of inequality regimes mostly correspond to the types of inequalities found by other scholars, and Acker cites their research extensively. By listing these dimensions she encourages scholars to be highly systematic in their data collection and analysis. However, not all her characteristics are relevant to Sri Lanka, and some might be more relevant to factory production than others. I will point these connections out in discussing the different items in her list.

(i). Bases of Inequality

Acker (2006) points to gender, class, race and sexuality as major bases of inequality and she also identifies religion, age, and physical ability as other bases of inequality. She recognises that although she lists many possible bases of inequality, gender, race and class are the most thoroughly embedded in organisational processes and practices in the US, but elsewhere the bases of inequality might be different.

'Gender' is present in all organisations and for Acker (2006), gender is a social construction that differentiates women and men, and also incorporates the beliefs and identities that support difference and inequality**.** The many ways in which gender is present in organisations were discussed above under 'gendered organisations' and 'gender regimes'.

Acker's second basis of inequality, class, refers to continuing and systematic differences in access to control over resources, mainly monetary, in wealthy industrial societies, for provisioning and survival. For Acker (2006a):

> *Class* generally stands for economic/power inequalities structured by production, market and/or occupational systems (p. 6).

She is of the view that class – i.e. the unequal distribution of economic power and resources – is intrinsic to employment as well as to most organisations because employment is an economic relation based on the payment of wages and salaries. She takes a Weberian view of class, which distinguishes between economic and other sources of power or status. Hence Acker (2006) argues that class processes in the wider society are reflected in the hierarchical positions of large organisations. This may not be so consistent in smaller organisations, which may be owned by people of modest resources, although the owner might have class power in relation to their employees.

She also argues that class is integrated with gender, since top managers are both men and middle class, whereas the lowest level workers are often women.

Although many women are now serving in managerial ranks, women are still mainly found in positions such as secretaries, care providers, servers and clerks. It is important to note that gender and class are not perfectly integrated but the class situations of women and men are shaped differently by gender and sexualised assumptions. Moreover, some jobs are seen as more suitable for men or women of a particular class. For instance, Williams*et al.* (2013) say that call centre work in Indian cities has been defined as 'pink-collar' work suitable for middle class women. Women may also compete for jobs with women from the same class background. For instance Bradley (1989) looked at how middle class women compete for top positions in organisations while working class women remain in low paid, sex-typed jobs. In the next chapter I will be looking at what social class means in the Sri Lankan context.

'Race' can also be a basis of inequality, and race can be defined as socially defined differences based on factors such as physical characteristics, culture and historical domination and oppression which are justified by engrained beliefs. While 'race' is still an important analytical category in the US, in the UK it has tended to be replaced by the concept of ethnicity. Barot, Bradley and Fenton (1999) discuss their decision to use the terms ethnicity and ethnic relations instead of race and race relations. Michael Lyon argues that race can be seen as a boundary of exclusion and ethnicity as a boundary of inclusion, and 'race' is seen as related to biology and ethnicity to culture (Barot, Bradley and Fenton, 1999).

The other bases of inequality Acker (2006) identifies are religion, sexuality, age and ability/disability. She identifies US minority religious identities such as Jewish, Catholic and Muslim as a basis for discrimination, but obviously the religious identities at issue will be different in different societies (Borstorff and Arlington, 2011; Messarra, 2014). As I discuss in the next chapter, religion is a particularly sharp division in Sri Lankan society.

Sexuality as a basis of inequality, for Acker, usually refers to the taken-for-granted superiority of heterosexual identities and life styles as positioned against homosexual identities and life styles. This discrimination pervades informal relations, as well as

formal support for family members. As Cockburn (1991) says, day-to-day relationships at work and discourse take for granted heterosexuality and heterosexual relations dominate most organisations. Heterosexuality may also be mobilised by organisations, for instance in their relations with customers (Adkins 1995). Moreover, sexual harassment, sexual joking and sexual abuse are used as a means of maintaining authority and controlling gender relations in organisations (Hearn *et al*., 1989). Such practices indicate that male heterosexuality is privileged in organisations. Certain 'physical disabilities' and 'age' are also considered by Acker (2006) as a significant basis for inequality. With the ageing of the labour force in the global North, analysts are giving age more attention (Parry and Tyson, 2011; Riach 2011).

ii. Shape and Degree of Inequality

Besides the bases of inequalities, Acker (2006) identifies variations in the shape and degree of inequalities in organisations as crucial. She includes the steepness of the hierarchy, degree and pattern of segregation, size of the wage difference and severity of power differences as dimensions of the shape and degree of inequality. By pointing out these aspects she highlights how inequalities vary between bureaucratic organisational hierarchies or due to organisational type. They might also vary between different countries, although she does not discuss this.

Acker (2006) is interested to find out how the 'steepness of the hierarchy' changes depending on the type of organisation. Steepness of an organisation's hierarchy may reflect steeper or flatter management structures, or the possible differences team work makes. However, she does not consider how far non-bureaucratic organisations may be characterised by a binary divide in the hierarchy between owners or managers, on the one hand, and workers, on the other, rather than a hierarchy characterised by the fine gradations one might see in bureaucratic organisations.

More frequently studied has been the extent and degree of segregation by race and gender, with significant differences between organisations. Segregation includes both horizontal segregation that concentrates women and men in different types of work, and vertical segregation that concentrates women in lower grades and men in higher grades (Bradley 1989). Similarly, Blackburn, Brooks and Jarman (2001) explore the relationship between segregation and inequality, and found that the advantage men

tend to enjoy in terms of pay is counter to previous findings and women have a modest advantage in terms of social stratification.

A further indication of the shape and degree of inequality is the 'size of the wage difference'(Acker, 2006, pp447) between levels, and the 'severity of power differences'(Acker, 2006, pp447). The latter is fundamental to class power, but labour unions and professional associations are capable of reducing power differences across class hierarchies. Hence the absence of trade unions in the Free Trade Zones of the global south is a key issue. Management style may also be an issue. For instance, Wacjman (1998) found that there are gendered contradictions when women attempt to use organisational power in the same way as men. Such women tend to get labelled as 'witches' or 'bitches' because women enacting power violates the conventions of women's relative subordination to men. Cockburn (1991) points out that some men might not see women as capable of authority or think they become unfeminine when they exercise it. So women may have to evolve other styles of management if they wish to reach top positions.

iii. Organising Processes

According to Acker (2006) the main way in which the bases of inequality are reproduced in organisations is through 'organising processes'. These organising processes include general requirements of work, recruitment and hiring, and informal interactions while carrying out work as particularly important in characterising different organisations' reproduction of inequalities.

By 'organising the general requirements of work', Acker (2006) means that organisations divide work between levels and units in different ways. But she also includes issues like the organisation of the working day. Thus employers frequently assume an unencumbered worker available for eight or more hours of continuous work away from home, arrival on time, total attention to the work and if requested long hours of work. But Acker (2012) says that she has modified this earlier view, since organisations – often for business reasons such as profits– seek part-time workers, usually women with family responsibilities, rather than unencumbered workers (Ermisch and Wright, 1993; Williams, Muller and Kilanski 2012). But women's obligations outside work still have a strong connection to the gendered organisation

of work, the maintenance of gender inequality in organisations, and the unequal distribution of women and men in organisational class hierarchies (Blackburn, Brooks and Jarman, 2001).

'Recruitment and hiring' is significant in reproducing inequalities and according to Acker (2006)

> Recruitment and hiring is a process of finding the worker most suited for a particular position. From the perspectives of employers, the gender and race of existing jobholders at least partially define who is suitable, although prospective co-workers may also do such defining (Enarson 1984). Images of appropriate gendered and racialized bodies influence perceptions and hiring. White bodies are often preferred, as a great deal of research shows (Royster 2003). Female bodies are appropriate for some jobs; male bodies for other jobs (p. 449).

Healey, Bradley and Forson (2011) found complex intersections between religious symbols, gender and ethnicity in making hiring decisions in the UK public sector organisations, with the interview panels being gendered and racialized. Men may still be preferred as the ideal worker in bureaucratic organisations, but not necessarily in all jobs. For instance, women may be seen as more compliant, or more willing to accept low wages or being ordered about (Adkins, 1995). Therefore the continuing patterns of segregation in many organisations provide evidence of the fact that gender, race and even social class still form the basis for hiring or a basis for exclusion (Blackburn, Brooks and Jarman, 2001).

Other organisational practices which reflect and contribute to hierarchies include how wages are set and how supervisory practices are ordered. According to Elson (1999) payment systems usually provide scope for discretion in practice irrespective of the rules that are meant to guide the system. Similarly, varying supervisory practices exist across organisations. Gender and other inequalities are preserved in supervisory practices, where relations may be affected by gender and race of both supervisor and subordinate.

Finally, Acker (2006) identifies as an important dimension of organisational practices the 'informal interactions' that take place 'while doing the work'. Cockburn (1991) in her study on four organisational case studies looked at gender, race and specifically class differences in interactions. She found that men do not want women to be in the male sphere and they do not want women to be loyal to each other. She also found that

organisations often do not implement costly changes which would benefit women, in part because men actively resist and generate barriers to impede women's career progression in organisations.

iv. The Visibility and Legitimacy of Inequalities

Acker (2006) also looks at the visibility and the level of awareness of inequalities in organisations, which can vary across organisations and argues that inequalities are not always visible and presumably employees aren't necessarily aware of inequalities. Inequalities may be invisible but that does not mean that they are not present. Awareness or lack of awareness may be intentional; in the Swedish banks Acker (1990) studied employees were asked not to discuss their wages with co-workers. But visibility is also due to privileges being taken for granted such as the privilege of the managers to command others. Class privilege is often hidden and, although there is a consciousness of these inequalities among lower level workers, they might not identify inequalities as relating to class. Sexuality is also a basis for inequality but mostly invisible to the majority who take heterosexuality for granted.

Similar to the visibility of inequalities, the legitimacy of inequalities varies between organisations. Class inequalities are legitimated because they are associated with different jobs located at different levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy. Acker (2006) suggests that organisations with democratic goals, such as cooperatives, tend to see inequalities as less legitimate than bureaucratic organisations. Mostly, though, inequalities are legitimated because they are naturalised, for instance through beliefs that women are more suited for caring roles (or those using their 'nimble fingers') and men for demanding careers. Another aspect that legitimates inequality concerns beliefs in biological differences between genders, and between racial/ethnic groups and the superiority of certain masculine traits.Healey, Bradley and Forson (2011) point out, with reference to the UK, that when class inequalities are compared to thoseof gender, race and religion, the latter are mostly seen as less legitimate.

vi. Control and Compliance

Finally, inequality regimes are characterised by organisational controls and compliance. This is where the inequality regime framework overlaps with Burawoy's

(1983) factory regimes, to be discussed later, since for both, obtaining the compliance and consent of workers is crucial. Acker (2006) focuses on how managers' power is made possible by the legitimation of organisational hierarchy to obtain workers' consent, for example via respect for authority whereas Burawoy gives more importance to ideological assumptions and the wider balance of class power.

According to organisation theorists there are several types of control, such as direct control, indirect control and internalized control. Direct control includes bureaucratic rules and various rewards for following rules, and punishments for breaking rules. Wages are also a form of direct control, since people are dependent on their earnings in completely monetized economies. Other forms of direct control are coercion, and physical and verbal violence (Hearn and Parkin, 2001), including sexual harassment. Indirect controls to obtain compliance and preclude resistance contain the selective recruitment of relatively powerless workers such as illegal immigrants (Acker and Van Houten, 1974 cited in Acker 2006). As we saw previously, when discussing the recruitment of women workers in the global garment industry, the recruitment of those assumed to be a compliant labour force is now a commonplace strategy. Internalised controls refers to organisational members internalising the legitimacy of organisational processes which reproduce inequality, for instance accepting the legitimacy of bureaucratic structures and rules which covertly reproduce male privilege. Healey, Bradley and Forson (2011) point to the acceptance of the right of managers to differentiate between employees on grounds of ethnicity. Internalised control may also take the form of encouraging the belief that it is pointless challenging the fundamental nature of gender, race and class identities. Moreover, women may disagree with the status quo but not be willing to challenge it because they do not want to be categorised as troublemakers.

Globalisation, Restructuring and Change in Inequality Regimes

As noted above, in 2004, 2006 and 2012 Acker began to talk more about the contexts in which organisations operate, and pinpointed globalisation as a crucial aspect of the context in which inequality regimes are maintained. She recognises that, compared to her earlier assumption that organisations inevitably consider men to be the ideal workers, women's labour has become a resource for global capital. Appropriate workers and services are developed based on the images and ideologies of femininity,

while global capital has direct but varied effects on the lives of women workers and their families. In particular globalisation and organisational restructuring mean that organisational inequalities are even more difficult to challenge:

> Organizational restructuring of the past 30 years has contributed to increasing variation in inequality regimes. Restructuring, new technology, and the globalization of production contribute to rising competitive pressures in private-sector organizations and budget woes in public-sector organizations, making challenges to inequality regimes less likely to be undertaken than during the 1960s to the 1980s (Acker, 2006: 458).

According to Acker (2006) inequality regimes can be challenged as well as changed, but it is hard and often tends to fail. This is mainly because the power of owner-managerial class interests usually outweighs the ability of those who experience inequality to defend their interests. Moreover, some members of the working class may share some of the interests of the managerial class, for instance based on masculine identities. As a consequence, both male managers and lower level male employees may insist on maintaining the prevailing organising patterns. While Cockburn (1991) saw this in terms of the relative advantages carried by white masculine identity as regards to workplace power and income, outside the UK those who perceive advantages in continuing inequality may be differently situated and can undermine change programs even if the top management supports such initiatives.

Factory Regimes as Inequality Regimes

As mentioned above Acker (2006) studied inequalities in bureaucratic organisations, so her approach needs to be modified to capture the specificity of the employer-employee relation in a factory context. Burawoy's (1983) studies of the forms taken by class struggles in factories provide a useful addition to my conceptual framework. Burawoy's concept of the 'factory regime' (1983) examines the ways that capitalist employers attempt to persuade workers to maintain the most output they can, against labour resistance, whether organised or informal. But for Burawoy what happens within the factory is also located within the balance of wider forces of working class struggle with capital as a whole. Instead of looking only at the factory-level labour relations, to which he gives great attention, he thinks it is necessary to look also at the wider politics of production, including forms of state power which regulate struggles over domination within the factory. According to Burawoy, as against a narrow understanding of the labour process, he 'defends

> the thesis that the process of production decisively shapes the development of working class struggle. This thesis can be sustained only if the process of production is seen to have two political moments. First, the organization of work has political and ideological *effects* - that is, as men and women transform raw materials into useful things, they also reproduce particular social relations as well as an experience of those relations. Second, alongside the organization of work – that is, the *labour process* – there are distinctive political and ideological *apparatuses of production* which regulate production relations. The notion of *production regime* or, more specifically, factory regime embraces both these dimensions of production politics (Burawoy, 1985: pp. 7-8).

Burawoy (1983) is thereforealso interested in how factory regimes change in relation to the wider political context. He has argued that whereas some regimes are despotic, i.e. rely on overt coercion, others persuade workers to cooperate with management. Because the latter rely on the hegemonic power of the capitalist class in society as a whole, he calls such regimes hegemonic. The hegemonic regime is possible only once the state is involved in the regulation of labour relations to win the consent of the working class and contributes to social welfare in an overt way. However, Burawoy (1983) argues that in a neo-liberal setting a third type of factory regime has emerged, which he calls hegemonic despotism. This is because capital can now threaten workers in various ways (for instance to move production overseas), so various aspects of coercion have crept back into the factory regime.

In the quotation above Burawoy (1983) also says that, as part of the labour process, women and men not only transform raw materials into useful things on the factory floor but they also reproduce social relations. Like Salzinger (2003), Burawory sees production in factories as producing not only items but also social relations, and reproducing what Acker would call class inequality. So both Acker and Burawoy focus on how social relations in the workplace reproduce wider social relations. Although Acker does not look at class *struggle* nor indeed the relation between inequality regimes within organisations and forms of state power, compared to Burawoy she gives more attention to a fuller range of social relations in which managers and workers are embedded as social actors; not just those concerning class, but also gender relations and other social divisions such as ethnicity and religion.

In conclusion, I suggest that Acker's (2006) conceptualisation of inequality regimes, linked with Burowoy's (1983) notion of factory regimes, is well suited for studying

inequalities in factories in the global South. This is because inequality regimes incorporate the intersectionality of the divisions in organisations in a systematic way that makes it easier to understand what to look for when studying inequalities in a work place, and it also pays attention to the significance of organisational context such as globalisation. Similarly, Burowoy (1983) is of the view that women and men not only transform raw materials into useful things on the factory floor but they also reproduce social relations. Further, Burawoy (1983) talks about class exploitation in factories but Acker (2006) does not address the exploitation of workers since she is concerned with white-collar workers in bureaucratic organisations.

Although inequality regimes have been studied in different organisations in different contexts, my study has specific concerns that have not been addressed previously. Firstly, inequality regimes have not been used as a theoretical framework to understand inequalities prevalent in garment factories, or to explore the relevance of a factory's position in the commodity chain. Secondly, so far as I know all the previous studies explicitly using the concept of 'inequality regime'have been carried out in developed countries in the global North, such as the UK, Sweden and Australia; my study is conducted in Sri Lanka, a developing country in the global South.

Research Questions

In order to focus deeply on what happens in organisations and see how capitalism and patriarchy work in organisations and in the wider society, I have adopted the concepts of inequality regimes (Acker, 2006) and Burawoy's (1983) factory regimes to explore factories in Sri Lanka with reference to intersecting inequalities such as gender, class and ethnicity. Thus I articulate as my questions:

1. What inequality regimes characterise garment-producing factories in Sri Lanka?

    (i) What are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in global garment factories in Sri Lanka?

    (ii) What other factors affect the reproduction of inequalities in global garment factories in Sri Lanka?

My second research question refers back to the literature on gender and manufacturing in the global South, and particularly Elson and Pearson's (1981) question about how much change has taken place in women's lives due to being employed in global garment factories. My question is:

2. Is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan global garment factories?

Having outlined my conceptual approach, in the next chapter I discuss the literature on women's employment and discuss particular issues that these concepts raise when looking at Sri Lanka in relation to economic condition, political context and the socio-cultural and religious background.

Chapter 2

The Economic and Social Position of Women in Sri Lanka

Introduction

Gender inequality pervades the Sri Lankan garment industry, the labour market and its nation building projects. The garment industry is the largest export industry in Sri Lanka, with garment exports in 2014 was equal to 4739 US dollar billion. By 2014 approximately 300,000 people were working in garment factories (Export Development Board, 2014), with women forming the majority of the labour force as they do in other foreign-exchange earning sectors, such as tea production and overseas employment, especially women's work as domestic maids in Middle Eastern countries.

Despite this, women work in lower grades, with low salaries and under strenuous working conditions (Otobe, 2013). There have been few state efforts to change this state of affairs (Wickramasinghe and Jayathilake, 2006), and the subordination of rural young women continues, along with barriers that prevent entry to better jobs and place limitations on women's career progression (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). Women are subject to socio-cultural exclusion and subordination which is rooted in the Sri Lankan patriarchal social structure (Kurian and Jayawardena, 2014), in the tenets of main religious groupings (Smits, 2011) and the nation-building efforts of the state (Gamage, 2007). In the formation of the nation, stereotypical women, disciplined and chaste, have come to symbolise the 'motherland' of Sri Lanka. Such efforts contribute to disempowering women through ascribing value to women mainly in terms of traditional and limited gender roles (Silva, 2000). Yet, the lives of women in Sri Lanka have also been subject to considerable change. Significant factors that contribute to changes in women's lives include liberal economic reforms, the decisions of international agencies, civil war, and the changing landscape of other political conflict, as well as women's employment.

This chapter describes the social and economic terrain in which inequality regimes in the Sri Lankan garment industry are located. I will be highlighting the growth of export-oriented, capitalist enterprise, especially in the garment industry, and what this

has meant for women's employment. All Sri Lankan garment factory owners and employees, both women and men, are inevitably affected in their opportunities and constraints by economic development fostered through state policies promoting the garment industry as a central plank of the economy and private sector growth. I give particular attention to the impact of the social divisions, like social class, religion, and ethnicity, as well as gender, which shape the opportunities of both women and men. Women (and men, although they are not the focus here) are also affected by the overtly patriarchal prescriptions and proscriptions of the country's main religious groups and patriarchal familial expectations about their role in socialising girls and monitoring their behaviour. Women's growing independence as workers unsurprisingly evokes hostility, in the form of attacks on young workers' sexual morality. We need to pay attention too to the ways that the state intervenes in balancing these divisions, interceding to favour some groups above others through various patriotic practices.

Women and the Economy

The overall shape and development of the Sri Lankan economy is riven with gender and class inequality which, as we will see, has driven many women into ill-paid jobs in the garment industry or overseas. Despite women forming the majority of workers in the garment industry, in the tea industry, and amongst migrants going overseas, their contribution is consistently underrated, while their contribution to the informal sector and productive and reproductive work in the family is almost entirely ignored.

Difficulties in Determining Women's Actual Contribution to Economic Well-Being

Although women are key participants in the economy's major income sectors, it is hard to grasp the extent of women's actual contribution due to the lack of reliable and accurate data, especially gender-disaggregated data (Fernando and Cohen, 2011; Ruwanpura, 2000; Jayaweera, 2003; Fernando and Cohen, 2013a). The officially recorded total male labour force, i.e. economically active men, was recorded as 5,728,383, or 75% of the total male population of working age, which was 7,676,876. Whereas for women the equivalent figures were 3,076,165 economically active women, out of a female population of working age of 8,854,892, or only 35% of the potential female workforce (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014). Of the inactive population, 62.8% of women are engaged in housework, as compared to 6.8% of men (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014). These women

are categorised as housewives, whose household work consists mainly of cooking, washing, cleaning and childcare and, in rural areas, collecting water and firewood (Herath, 2015).

The under-reporting of women's participation in economic life in official Sri Lankan statistics follows a similar pattern to other countries, where women's domestic and agricultural work is rarely recorded (Beneria and Sen, 1981; Wickramasinghe and Jayathilake, 2006). This is because women's work is so often undertaken within the family, as housework and/ or as unpaid agricultural family labour. Even though in Sri Lanka unpaid family labour is supposed to be captured in the category 'contributing family worker', defined as 'women or men working in family related business or farming but without a payment', this still ignores much of women's work within the family that contributes to family farms and businesses, along with work essential to the survival of families. Out of the employed population, 7% of women are listed under the employment status as 'contributing family worker'. Under this category there are 751,215 people, of whom 592,560 or 78.9% are women (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014). Yet observers like Medagama (2015) report, in contrast, that, on average, rural Sri Lankan women work 14 to 15 hours a day, which includes paddy cultivation, home gardening, animal husbandry, housework, drawing water from wells and collecting firewood, whereas men work only 8 to 10 hours a day (Herath, 2015).

Declining Participation of Women in the Private Sector and Restricted Opportunities in the Public Sector

In the three main sectors in the economy, namely, agriculture, services and industry, of the employed population in 2014, 45% were in services, 28.5% in agriculture and 26.5% in industry (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, 2014). The gender composition of the workforce in these sectors is available only for agriculture, where women's share in total agriculture employment increased from 37.8 % in 2004 to 38.59% by 2010 (Otobe, 2013), presumably because men have been better able to move out of it. Indeed, the available figures show that whereas there have been some increases in jobs in the formal sector for men, this has not been the case for women.

Jayaweera (2003) reports that women's participation in the private sector, supposedly the 'engine of growth' in Sri Lanka, is declining. From 2004 the decline was more

modest. According to the Labour Force Survey published in 2014, there were 3,461,860 'employees' in the private sector, of whom only 29% (1,003,373) were women but 71% (2,458,487) were men. The participation of women in the private sector in the 'employee' category declined by 1% over the decade 2004 to 2014, although men's participation increased by 2%. (Since this decline in the private sector was mainly due to the loss of jobs in the garment industry due to removal of GSP Plus, I discuss it later.) In contrast, in the public sector there was an increase of 6% for women but a decrease of 6% for men (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report, 2004, Annual Report 2014). Of the 1,292,835 people in the 'employee' category in the public sector, 44% (570,937) were women and 56% (721,898) men. This growth in public sector employees is due partly to the creation of jobs by politicians seeking votes in the presidential elections of 2005 and 2010, and the general elections in 2010 (Amarasuriya, 2015). Yet this growth in employment is not keeping up with the numbers of young people seeking work, which I discuss later.

Women are also under-represented in top management positions within the public and private sectors (M.Wickramasinghe and W.Jayathilake, 2006; L.Jayatilake, 2016). In the public sector, where 44% of the total workforce are women, access is widening but still participation of women in decision-making positions is very low (L.Jayathilaka, 2005). In 2014, the proportion of women in public sector management was only 24.8%, although it was much higher, at 64.3%, for state sector professionals, which includes teachers and nurses. For public sector clerical work women accounted for 52.1% (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, 2014; Fernando and Cohen, 2011).

Perhaps more significant, unemployment among women is rising, but men's is not. In 2014, the number of unemployed persons was estimated at about 380,554. Out of this total, 52.6 % were women and 47.4% men. The overall unemployment rate is 4.3%, 6.5% for women and 3.1% for men. Although overall unemployment rates went down between 2004 and 2014, the proportion of unemployed women increased by 0.6% but decreased by 0.6% for men (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, 2004 and 2014, 2004).

Women's unemployment rate is higher among more educated women. In 2014 it was 11% for women with GCE (Advanced Level) qualifications or above. Men's unemployment rate was also higher among the more educated (5.3%) but less than women's. The next highest level of unemployment was among category GCE

(Ordinary Level), at 8.9% and 4.4% for women and men respectively. Unemployment also correlates with age. The highest unemployment rate for either gender is reported for the age category 15 to 24 years old, with women's unemployment within this age category at a whopping 27.5% compared to 16.2% for men (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, 2014). Yet gender has not been taken into consideration by policies aimed at reducing unemployment, nor are young people's gender-specific experiences and needs taken into consideration (Malhotra and DeGraff, 1997; Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). State bodies and politicians seem to be more conscious of reducing young men's unemployment, in order to prevent social disruptions, such as the armed youth uprisings that took place in 1971 and 1989 (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012).

Unemployment is most prevalent among rural women, where 82% of the population live (Sireeranhan, 2013). Farmers are unable to provide foreven the basic needs of their families due to low earnings from agriculture, in combination with large family size, which is bigger than in urban areas. Income in agriculture fluctuates wildly due to natural disasters such as flood or drought (Vishwanath and Yoshida, 2007) and the level of government subsidies (Wijetunge and Saito, 2017). Although agriculture absorbs some of women's labour as family workers, who actively participate (Sireeranhan, 2013), they do not receive a wage. They have also been badly affected by the decline of the cottage industries that employed women in rural areas prior to economic liberalisation in 1977.

Women suffer further from high levels of poverty, especially in rural areas. Thus 2,303,000 people from the rural sector are recorded as either in poverty, and out of households in poverty 15.2% are headed bywomen (Poverty report, 2016). Although there are no gender-disaggregated poverty statistics (Country Briefing Paper, 1999), it has been suggested that women, as the main waged agricultural labourers, are especially badly detrimentally affected when flooding or drought depresses agricultural wages (Vishwanath and Yoshida, 2007). Female-headed households are most common in the war-affected areas of the North and the East. The mean income of these female-headed households is very near or below the official poverty line, whereas male-headed households are well above it (Amirthalingam and Lakshman, 2010).

The highest poverty level is reported for the estate sector, which was 10.9% in 2011-12 (Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, 2013). Women form more than one half of the workforce (Ramesh, Rasnayake and Kamalarathne, 2013), accounting for about 130,000 women, though this is much less than the number of women in the garment industry (Kotikula and Solotaroff, 2006). Plantation workers account for about 5% of the country's population, and are mostly Tamils brought in from India by the British as plantation workers.

The Garment Industry

Since its inception, the export-oriented garment industry has been central to the Sri Lankan economy and crucial as an avenue for women's employment. Its expansion and setbacks are closely connected to state policies of various kinds, and these have a major impact on the jobs and income of the mainly female labour force. They also inevitably shape the fortunes of employers, and hence the number of workers employed at different times.

The export-oriented garment industry was established in 1977, as part of the process of economic liberalisation (Jayaweera, 2003; Tilakaratne, 2006; Kelegama, 2009; Nawa, 2015) where the early adoption of a structural adjustment package was promoted by the IMF and World Bank (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012). Economic liberalisation led to the collapse of the handloom sector, which had provided employment for women in rural areas. It replaced rural textile manufacture organised around cottage industries. In the pre-liberalisation era, the political party in government office, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, were ideologically disposed towards the promotion of local cultural values (Smits, 2011), and both farmers and the textile industry producing for the non-competitive local market enjoyed state protection. At that time large-scale, state-run textile mills employed more men than women, but medium sized and small-scale privately owned establishments employed more women than men (Perera, 2000; Weerakoon and Thennakoon, 2006).

Women's strong participation in agriculture was also affected by the reduction of state subsidies under economic liberalisation, leaving paddy and farm cultivators without the wherewithal for fertilizers and other inputs (Wijetunge and Saito, 2017). Village farms, where women were employed growing non-rice grains, vegetables, chillies,

tomatoes and fruit were also detrimentally affected(de Munck, 1999). Hence women were forced to seek employment in the new export-oriented garment industry.

Since then the garment industry has come to play a huge role within the Sri Lankan economy and labour market. It accounts for 44% of total exports, far more than the 14% contributed by the tea industry (Development Board, 2014), or remittances from migrant workers working overseas, which form 8.5% of the Gross Domestic Product of Sri Lanka (Economic and Social Statistics, 2014). At present the industry is producing garments for a number of internationally reputed brand names, such as Marks and Spencer, Abercrombie and Fitch, Tommy Hilfiger, GAP, Liz Claiborne, Nike, Ralph Lauren, and Victoria's Secret (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015).

As the largest provider of employment in the industrial sector, the garment industry employs approximately 283,000 people, as of 2013 (Board of Investment in Sri Lanka, 2013). There are approximately 300 garment factories recognised by the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, and situated within and outside Free Trade Zones (FTZ's) (Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, 2013). In 2005, women were by far the majority of workers; as of 2005, 85% of the garment industry workers were women, with 60% in the age group 18-25 years. However, by 2012 women accounted for 73% of the work force, still a large majority (Savchenko and Acevedo, 2012). This was a direct result of approximately 10,000 job losses (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015) due to the removal of GSP Plus (Generalised System of Preferences Plus, which I will discuss later in the chapter).

Most women's jobs in the industry are labelled 'unskilled', held by young migrant women from rural areas without other sources of income. Many of them are the family breadwinner. According to Attanapola (2005), 55% of these young women's parents are economically dependent on their daughters, and 40% of their siblings also depend on them for financial support. Their family background is as follows: 56% of the women garment workers are from families without any other permanent source of income, 28% from farming families, 10% from estate workers' families; 4% of their households have someone employed in government jobs and 2% have income from petty commodity businesses. According to Hensman (2011), Tamil women from the war-affected areas have been brought to fill the vacancies in the garment factories since the end of the war in 2009.

Most women employees in the garment industry labour at the bottom of the hierarchy under poor conditions (Wickramasinghe and Jayatilaka, 2006). The industry has a bad reputation for its employment practices (Kelegama, 2009; Otobe 2013). The workers face arduous working conditions at the best of times, and little recognition as workers (Tilakaratne, 2006; Jayewardene, 2014; Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015), often being dismissed as 'dowry seekers' (Lynch 2002) who are working temporarily for extra money for their dowry rather than recognised as workers supporting their families. Women shop floor workers' lack of status as workers is epitomised by being addressed as 'lamai' in Sinhala, meaning 'children' (Jayewardene, 2014). Men are not called 'lamai', which in this context degrades the value of women's work and their status as workers.

Given the working conditions, turnover in the industry is high, while cuts in employment push women back into agricultural production (Otobe, 2013). Women also leave the industry due to demands from their families to return home from the Free Trade Zones. Young unmarried women may try to leave their jobs to get married before their reputations are tarred by the image of the industry (Hewamanne, 2003). This is encouraged by the way the state pension contributions operate, since a woman employee who marries within three months of the date of resignation can claim back her contributions to the Employee Provident Fund (EPF)[2] by producing a marriage certificate (Gunawardana, 2013). Factories try to retain employees by taking them on annual outings, for instance to a holiday resort or a beach (Hewamanne, 2003[3]), by celebrating national holidays with ceremonies and bonuses, and they also play music in factories throughout the day. According to Hewamanne (2006) workers simply accept these small treats for the pleasure they provide, and do not interpret them as aspects of the employer's strategic efforts to retain labour.

[2]The Employees Provident Fund (EPF) was established under Act No. 15 of 1958 and is currently the largest Social Security Scheme in Sri Lanka.According to the EPF Act, an employee is required to contribute a minimum of 8% and the employer a minimum of 12% of the total salary of the employee monthly.

[3] According to Hewamanne (2006) workers have not reflected on the way that the factories structure women's leisure time by organising ceremonies and trips, and women have not understood these events as capitalist strategies that might hinder employees efforts to resist exploitation.

For many women workers the only viable alternative is work as domestic servants in the Middle East (Abeyasekera and Jayasundere, 2015). As a result, in 2011 women working in foreign countries under the migrant labour category accounted for approximately 600,000 people (Tidball, 2011). By 2015 this figure had increased to approximately 750,000 (Statistics on labour migration within the Asia Pacific region, 2015).

The Garment Industry and State Support

I want to spend a bit more time explaining just how entangled the garment industry is with the policies of the state, and the response of international buyers to the lack of human rights. The political economy of the garment industry continues to be shaped by wider national and international pressures.

The creation of the garment industry in 1977 provided attractive benefits for foreign investors (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012) and led to a huge inflow of foreign direct investments (Tilakaratne, 2006), including funds for massive infrastructure projects from donor agencies (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012). The first Free Trade Zone was established in Katunayake (Lynch, 2002), in the Western province of the country in 1978. Garment factories accounted for the majority of the factories established in the three main zones established between 1978 and 1991 (Abeywardene *et al.*, 1994).

Foreign investors were attracted by the textile and clothing quotas under the Multi Fibre Agreement (MFA) of 1977 (Abeywardene *et al.*, 1994), which made it possible for companies in the global North to make use of cheap, skilled labour by transferring production of some labour-intensive manufacturing products to the global South (Elson and Pearson, 1981). Under the Multi Fibre Agreement, the World Trade Organisation's agreement on Textiles and Clothing provided guaranteed markets for Sri Lankan garment products in the United States, the European Union and Canada (Tilakaratne, 2006; Arai, 2006; Savchenko and Acevedo, 2012).

The government of Sri Lanka put a lot of effort into providing a welcoming environment for foreign investors and production for export. This effort contributed to improvements such as lowering the countrywide unemployment rate from 18.7% in 1973 to 13.8% in 1991, with a further fall to 11.3% in the first quarter of 1996. But this growth also led to tensions and crises. The first of these directly concerned the gender composition of the industry, since young men suffering unemployment

resented the rapid growth of female employment, as there was less growth among men. While unemployment rates decreased between 1980 and 1985 (Nanayakkara, 2004), the perceived marginalisation of rural male youth, especially those with secondary level education, became a major social and political challenge (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). Rural male youth did not benefit from the garment industry, although educated rural women did not necessarily feel that they benefited adequately either, since they were taking jobs which were far below what they felt their educational qualifications warranted. For example, in 1994 76% of the women in the garment industry were reported to be working as trainees or unskilled and semi-skilled workers (Abeywardene *et al*., 1994). Hancock *et al.* (2015) report that they studied 1878 garment employees who had qualification of GCE (O/L) or incomplete GCE (O/L)[4]. One consequence was that 1989 the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP), or in English, the People's Liberation Front, a small, Marxist-nationalist political party claiming to represent the oppressed lower class young Sinhala male majority (Smits, 2011), organized the armed uprising of rural youth, especially by men around 25 years of age. This partly reprised a previous revolt by young men in 1971. The 1989 revolt was brutally crushed by the government, but it reduced the attraction of foreign investors and Sri Lanka's economy faced a crisis (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012).

To overcome this economic crisis the state implemented a set of radical policy reforms in the early 1990s under the guidance of the IMF. Under these policy reforms the state further reduced the regulation of foreign investment, which led to further expansion of the labour-intensive export industries (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012). Similarly, in 1992 the state decided to establish two hundred garment factories in rural areas, to further reduce unemployment (Tilakaratne, 2006). This was intended to promote employment opportunities for the unemployed rural youth who had rebelled. It was expected that although women would be hired to work in the factories, men would have the opportunity to establish support services, such as shops, eating houses, and transport services to serve factory employees (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). However, the encouragement of a male-owned enterprises policy was not a success, as by the late 1990s most of the small- and medium-scale enterprises faced

[4] General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level).

financial difficulties due to the shortage of medium and long-term funding from financial institutions (Sonoda, 2008).

A bigger crisis for the industry occurred when the GATT MFA quotas agreement for imports into the global Northern countries expired on 1 January 2005, and the overseas market for garments shrank rapidly. This led to the closure of 15 factories in the medium and small categories, 14 of them in rural areas, between January and October 2005. These closures led to about 3000 workers, mostly women, losing their jobs with minimal or no compensation (Tilakaratne, 2006). However, the MFA was replaced by the negotiation of the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP Plus) with the European Union (EU) in 2005, which enabled Sri Lanka toexport garments into the European Union at a reduced or zero rate of duty. However, a major condition of the GSP Plus agreement was to require Sri Lanka and other signatories to ratify and implement 27 specified international conventions in the fields of human rights, core labour standards, sustainable development and good governance. The agreement expected partner states in the global South to protect human rights, to maintain labour standards and to ensure good governance. The EU reserved the right to withdraw the agreement if a member country failed to fulfil the given conditions (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015). Hence Sri Lankan access to overseas markets came to hinge on the state's human rights and other standards, and in 2010 the GSP agreement with Sri Lanka was rescinded by the EU due to human rights abuses. Two issues are relevant here, firstly labour rights and secondly the human rights abuse that occurred during and after the Civil War in Sri Lanka.

The Abuse of Labour Rights

Although the Sri Lankan constitution incorporates labour rights for workers, including the right to form trade unions, in practice garment industry workers have been left without a strong collective voice. The Board of Investment (BOI) of Sri Lanka, the state's regulating authority for the garment and other industries, whichfunctions as a central facilitation point for investors, has no power to exempt, modify or vary the labour legislation that ensures the rights of workers (Sarveswaran, 2000). But it is mainly up to the BOI to set and amend regulations, for instance which rules can be left to the employers' discretion, such as access to sick leave. In practice even BOI rules may be ignored by some factories. According to Compa (2003), working hours of 12

to 14 hours a day are common, compared to the9 hours per day specified by the BOI – inclusive of a one hour meal break.Saturday is meant to be a short working day comprised of 5½ hours, inclusive of a half hour for a meal or rest (Board of Investment 2004, Policy statement on labour standards and employment relations).

Most at issue have been workers' rights to association, assembly and speech, which are widely curtailed. The employers, along with the state and the Board of Investment, have engaged in the wide repression of collective action and trade unions (Biyanwila, 2011). Anti-union tactics, such as strict security controls, further weaken union organisation, especially in the free trade zones (Abeywardene *et al.,* 1994). There have been some successes by union organisers but these have been fiercely contested. For instance, continued protests of workers over a decade enabled workers to get the consent of employers to formally recognize union rights in 1999, and to form the Free Trade Zone Worker Union (FTZWU) in 2000. This union was the first of its kind in the FTZs, but remained limited to factories in free trade zones (Biyanwila, 2011). The union elected a majority of women to the executive (Archive.cleanclothes.org). Although employees from three free trade zones joined the union, the employers did not allow women to form branches within the factories (Biyanwila, 2011).Workers who attempted to form branches within factories were heavily beaten and, in certain instances, union members were arrested when attempting to negotiate with management to resolve grievances (Archive.cleanclothes.org). Anti-union brutality can be facilitated by some Human Resource managers (of factories), as most of them are either ex-police or military personnel (Biyanwila, 2011).

Instead of trade unions the Board of Investment promotes the formation of factory-level Joint Consultative Councils (JCCs), with an equal number of worker representatives and managers, as a forum for labour-management relations within garment factories (Abeywardene *et al*., 1994; Biyanwila, 2011). Gunawardana (2014) found that despite the suppression of employee unionisation, managers permit the existence of internal, individualized voice mechanisms for expressing employees' views. Managers themselves find these convenient for dealing with conflicts, absenteeism, etc., before they get too serious. Women discuss their issues and grievances initially with their immediate supervisors, and if not resolved these proceed to other levels. However, Gunawardana says, the 'respect' embedded in workplace

hierarchies curtails women's voice in formal settings, as a result of women's socialization within a patriarchal social structure.

Although it was not the abuse of labour rights that led to the cancellation of the GPS in 2010 (Archive.cleanclothes.org), it has been taken up as an issue by ethical trade unions and consumers' organisations. For instance, the Clean Clothes Campaign is a global alliance of trade unions and NGOs campaigning on women's rights, consumer advocacy and poverty reduction in the global garment and sportswear industries,and for structural improvements in working conditions and empowerment of employees. The Clean Clothes Campaign includes more than 200 organisations and unions in garment-producing countries in its network, including Sri Lanka. The Campaign, along with other international organisations such as the IndustriALL Global Union and the International Trade Union Confederation, have argued that producer countries have to adopt measures to comply with worker rights prior to re-awarding GSP Plus facility to Sri Lanka.

Civil War, Human Rights and GSP Plus

Much more serious for the fortunes of the garment industry's foreign markets were the effects of the civil war (Ganegodage and Rambaldi, 2013), which according to Athukorala and Jayasuriya (2012) meant that unstable economic conditions were exaggerated, leading to the closing of factories, the loss of jobs and continuing unstable economic condition. The closures were due mainly to the destruction of infrastructure and productive capital, and a reduction in foreign investment.

Clashes between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) date back to the 1970s, but the state officially declared war in 2006. There were continuing allegations of human rights violations by the state and armed forces, especially during the later stages of the war. Injustice and human rights violations continued after the victory of the armed forces in May 2009. According to the International Commission of Jurists (2012) exercising extra-legal power with impunity became institutionalized due to erosion of the mechanisms meant to impose accountability on state actors, and to check the arbitrary use of power. Disregard for the rule of law and interference with the judiciary had become commonplace. Due to violations, which continued in the post-war period, the attempts of the government to regain GSP Plus were turned down by the European Union up to 2017.

These human rights violations led to the cancellation of GSP Plus (Generalised System of Preferences Plus) in 2010, a facility offering concessionary duties for exports from Sri Lanka to the European Union (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015; Smits, 2011). Removal of GSP Plus led to the closure of nearly 25 apparel factories, with approximately 100,000 jobs lost and a two per cent drop in GDP by 2013 (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015). Thus the cost of the war was partly borne by the garment industry with job losses for women in factories.

Due in part to the then ruling party's unlawful behaviour, it was defeated in the presidential and general elections of 2015 when a coalition government was elected with the support of a wide range of civil society groups demanding the restoration of democracy and a more tolerant political culture (Amarasuriya, 2015). The new government took immediate steps to regain GSP Plus. The local newspaper *Daily News* reported that Sri Lanka had formally applied to regain the GSP Plus trade concession on the 28th of June 2016, six years after its removal by the European Union (Daily News, 29/06/2016). According to the *Daily Mirror* if the GPS Plus facility is reinstated the government expects an annual windfall of US $1.9 billion, mainly through apparel exports (Daily Mirror, 02/11/2016). At the time of writing these have been successful (Daily Mirror, 18/05/2017).

As part of these negotiations, the government was forced to reinvigorate its existing provisions for ethical trading. These go back to the government's response to the phasing out of the Multi Fibre Agreement, when garment manufactures attempted to present themselves as responsible business entities, committed to ethical working conditions (Ruwanpura, 2016). The Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF), the brand owner of Sri Lanka Apparel, initiated Garments without Guilt certification to businesses on behalf of the its members. As of 2015 the charter that businesses are asked to sign promises ethical working conditions free of child labour, forced labour, discrimination or sweatshop practices (Bair, Dickson and Miller, 2013). Signatories have to implement systems to ensure the establishment of key requirements of this charter. The Joint Apparel Association Forum appoints an independent third party to audit companies' achievement of compliance (Bair, Dickson and Miller, 2013). By 2015, 80% of local garment factories had subscribed to Garment without Guilt certification (Export Development Board, Sri Lanka, 2015). However, Ruwanpura

(2016) argues that such top-down measures do not incorporate trade unions or worker representation, and ignore day-to-day exploitation built into the labour process.

Social Divisions

The social context of these developments in the garment industry is of major social divisions within Sri Lanka along the lines of social class, religion and ethnicity, and gender. Women's opportunities and treatment at work are deeply entangled with social status distinctions. The intersectional identities discussed below directly affect women's and men's employment opportunities within and outside of the garment industry. They may form the 'bases of inequality' of inequality regimes(Acker 2006) in Sri Lanka that I identified in my fieldwork.

Social class

Class stratification is significant for a country, as class relations are sometimes seen as the driving force of social conflicts and underpin a country's social structure (Smits, 2011). In Sri Lanka the class system has developed on the basis of various socio-economical, cultural and religious identities (Riswan, 2014). The conventional division between upper, middle and lower classes is in common usage but it is not sufficient to identify the social class structure in a changing society such as Sri Lanka. In fact it can be difficult to identify the specific social classes in contemporary Sri Lanka, such as where one social class ends and another begins (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016). The Sri Lankan class structure is complicated, and it is useful to distinguish between the elites, the upper middle class, the lower middle class, the working class and the poor. Yet so far I have not been able to find a single systematic account of Sri Lanka's class structure in the academic literature. Class also overlaps with rural or urban residence and caste. Ethnicity and religion are the other broad and overlapping features of social stratification, and are discussed later in this chapter.

Different scholars divide the middle class in Sri Lanka in different ways. Categorising by employment type, Arunatilake and Omar (2013) say that

> Among occupation categories, the largest category for the global middle class is professionals, followed by technical and associate professionals. For the local middle class, thelargest occupation category is skilled agriculture and fishery workers, followed by elementary occupations and craft workers. The largest

> occupation category for the poor is elementary work[5], followed by skilled agriculture and fishery work and craft related work[6] (Arunatilake and Omar, 2013, pp 73-74).

Employment in the public sector is concentrated in the middle classes, with about one third of the global middle class and one fifth of the local middle class working in public sector employment. The poor have much less access to public sector employment, with only 6% working in the public sector. Own-account working[7] is common among the poor and the local middle class. The poor work mostly in private sector employment, which accounts for 58% of the poor population. Around 43% of the local middle class works in the private sector(Arunatilake and Omar, 2013).

Similarly, the report on Poverty in Sri Lanka (2006/07) shows that poverty is highly associated with the employment of household heads, and households headed by persons with elementary occupations (who are unskilled casual labourers or own-account workers) have the highest poverty level, followed by agricultural and fishery workers. Thus the highest poverty levels prevail among private sector employees both in the formal or informal sectors. Household size is also related to poverty as larger households, especially with children, are more likely to be poor with a reported mean household income of Rs 11534 per month. In the rest of this thesis I follow local usage by using the words 'lower social class' for this class category.

Bamunusinghe (2014) makes distinctions between middle class levels based on their consumption patterns, e.g. type of housing, education and ownership of new technologies, rather than occupation. He distinguishes between members of global middle class and members of the local middle class. The 'upper middle class' nowadays is sometimes referred to as the global middle class, because it sees itself as part of a global middle class, and educates its children in English. As consumers their preference for branded goods such as designer clothes, technical appliances and even health services influence global demand. This level's income is about US $3,658 a year (2006 prices) or US $10 a day in purchasing power (Arunatilake and Omar,

[5] A definition for elementary work is not given in the article but is defined as unskilled labourers in Poverty in Sri Lanka, 2006/07.
[6] A definition for craft-related work is not given.
[7]There is no clear definition for 'own-account worker' but it falls under the category called self-employed (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014)

2013).Historically the middle class consisted of intellectuals, and they were neither capitalists nor workers but educated service providers and small-scale service providers. They lived in their own houses, were hard-working and enjoyed a comfortable life style. This group is expanding, but still represents less than 5% of the population. The local middle class have expenditures of between $2 and $10 per person per day (Arunatilake and Omar, 2013).

The lower middle class is the dominant sub-class within the Sri Lankan middle class (Riswan, 2014). As the top layer of the former urban working class has been able to take advantage of new opportunities in the urban service sector, some households have developed expenditure patterns and aspirations more similar to white collar workers in the lower middle class (Bamunusinghe, 2014). Such households live in concrete apartment blocks or very small individual homes and send their children to local schools.

Another way of distinguishing between fractions of the middle class is to identify the traditional middle class, urban middle class and the emerging middle class in terms of their values. When the characteristics of these different cohorts are considered, the traditional middle class, with intergenerational roots in middle class professions or state employment, is characterised by a greater inclination to seek high educational qualifications; whereas the emerging and 'middle super class', the latter moving towards elite status, lean more towards business and entrepreneurship (Bamunusinghe, 2014, who does not define these terms). A mix of traditional and 'middle super class' values are visible in the urban middle class (Bamunusinghe, 2014).

Above the middle class, however, has emerged a new elite whose wealth and status derive from access to political power. They have joined the owners of large plantation estates, the owners of large companies, and successful professionals and directors of companies as members of the upper class. The rich have sufficient income to spend in the region of $100 per person per day (Arunatilake and Omar, 2013). The introduction of the executive presidency in 1978, the most critical intervention to the political system in Sri Lanka since independence in 1948, has led to the formation of a new elite class (Venugopal, 2014). Members of this elite belong to the president's inner circle (Venugopal, 2014; Amarasuriya, 2015) or occupy seats of power through various means, such as elections, being loyal to the party in power and by personal

compromises with the ruling party. Some argue that they are able to seize a large portion of the national wealth under the guise of institutional perks, such as commissions for state contracts, underhand financial deals and bribes for awarding tenders that violate tender procedures. With the power they possess this class manipulates the bureaucratic and the judicial apparatus of Sri Lanka (Bandara, 2014).

At the other end of the scale, at the bottom of the class structure, are people with less than $2.00 of expenditure per day. Although many work in factories or in self-employed craftwork or selling, they depend on state subsidies for part of their consumption – for instance access to cheap food. They do not possess proper housing, but live in urban slums or shantytowns or in rural areas (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016). They are comprised of around 2,805,000 people (of the total population), and 2,303,000 live in rural areas (Poverty Report, 2016).

Maintaining Class Divisions

Access to English-medium education is an important factor in the maintenance of class divisions, and a hindrance to social mobility. English-language proficiency (and the manners and etiquette with which it is associated) is necessary to obtain a good job in the urban economy, especially in the private sector (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009; Fernando and Cohen, 2016). Although universal free education in the country has led to a relatively educated population (Little and Sabates, 2008; Ahamedlebbe, 2011), the quality of education varies across geographical locations and social classes. This is mainly due to insufficient facilities to study pure sciences and unqualified teaching staff, mostly in rural schools, especially to teach English language and sciences. Most rural students, and especially women, study in Commerce or Arts streams, in Sinhala or Tamil, at free provincial schools (Silva, 2005; Riswan, 2014). Even at university level, the majority of students in the humanities and social sciences come from poorer, rural farming families, with medical, engineering and other science degree programs monopolised by students from more privileged backgrounds (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). Moreover, in recent years private universities with foreign affiliations have emerged, which award degrees in the humanities and social sciences to upper middle class students who are more likely to

obtain highly paid jobs in the private sector, rather than arts or social science graduates from state universities (Fernando and Cohen, 2016).

Another impediment to mobility is a lack of access to political patronage. The increasing importance of political patronage leads to social injustice and frustrates young people (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). Securing a job in both the public and the private sector requires political influence. This is because of the growing links between politicians and their relatives and private sector business personnel (Bandara, 2014).

In the private sector, especially, class discrimination is pervasive. Recruiters favour urban upper and middle class entrants, and even ethnic minority middle class aspirants can benefit from this discrimination (Hettige, 2004). Thus irrespective of educational/professional achievements, rural youth from lower social classes end up in semi-skilled blue collar jobs in the private sector – including the garment industry (Fernando and Cohen, 2016).

In Sri Lanka the caste system is less significant and less visible than in India, but still matters in a few respects, for instance as regards marriage choices (Silva, Sivapragasam, Thanges, 2009). Generally scholars have argued that with global trends towards modernising the social structure, caste is now subsumed into the social class hierarchy (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016). But ethnicity and religion are very important.

Religion and ethnicity

In Sri Lanka the official religion is Buddhism, practiced by the Sinhala. In 2014 Buddhists accounted for 70.2% of the population (Economic and Social Statistics, 2014). The other main religions are Hinduism, practiced by Tamils, who were brought to Sri Lanka from India by British colonialists as plantation workers. They form approximately 15.3% of the population. Islam and Christianity are the other main religions. Muslims form approximately 9.3% of the population, which includes different communities, including the Sri Lanka Moors, Coastal Indian Moors, Malays, and Bohra's (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012). These Sinhala, Tamils, and Muslims, along with a small number of Burghers, of Dutch descent, are also seen as ethnic groups. Christians, who are usually Tamil or Sinhala in ethnicity, make up 7.4% percent of the population. Although formally these groups are equal, the state has

consistently favoured the Sinhala, underpinning the survival of elite political leaders (Amarasuriya, 2015).

State promotion of Buddhism over other religions has several faces. Most notably, Buddhism is presented as the unifying power of the state (Gaul, 2017), binding together people and the state to protect Sinhala Buddhist identity. Indeed, Chapter 2 of the Sri Lankan constitution states that 'The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the State to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana', although also assuring to all religions the rights granted later in the constitution[8] (The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 2015).

Politicians promote Buddhism as a platform for securing power and maintaining the dominance of the ethnic majority (Bartholomeusz and De Silva, 1998; Devotta, 2007). Buddhist priests are invited to invoke blessings at all state occasions, and then other religious leaders are invited to bless the gathering. According to Act No. 29 of 1971 the monthly full moon poya day shall be a public and bank holiday(Chapter 364, Holidays, 1971), to facilitate Buddhist participation in religious activities. Further, in Sri Lanka, Vesak, the full moon day on which the Lord Buddha was born, attained Buddhahood and passed away, is celebrated annually as a national festival supported by state patronage.

The ethnic division between Sinhala and Tamils erupted into a civil war in the 1980s, although there were other causes too. Since independence, the state has been in a continuous struggle to establish a unitary state, so as to include the Northern and Eastern provinces of the country dominated by Tamils. This was opposed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which claims the legitimacy of a separate state for the same provinces. The war was sparked when power-sharing between the LTTE and the state broke down (Gamage, 2007). The state defined its armed persecution of the Tamil Tigers as a patriotic war to defend Sinhala Buddhism as the core state religion (Degalle, 2006; Bastian, 2013). Other writers are critical of the continuing hegemony of the Sinhala Buddhists as opposed to the ethnic minorities and

[8] Every person is entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.The freedom, either by himself or in association with others, and either in public or in private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

religions (Gamage, 2007). This became very visible when Buddhist monks began entering politics in 2001 and 2004 in support of resolving the ethnic crisis (Degalle, 2006).

The Tamil uprisings, and how they were crushed, were also a result of years of broken promises by successive governments (Amarasuriya, 2015). Other resentments also fuel political conflict and uprisings, including the links between elite Sinhala politicians' families and kin, with a large portion of Sinhala and Tamil society excluded from this patronage system (Gamage, 2007).

Gender

Although women's life chances are affected as members of various social classes and religions, they are also subject to gender-specific ideological prescriptions and social controls. I have already discussed women's labour market participation and concentration in the garment industry, but want to note some additional factors that make the garment industry an option even for women with educational qualifications. I then consider the ways in which Buddhism, as the dominant religion, constructs women and femininity. Finally, we need to explain both the role of the family in reproducing gender ideology and often limiting women's options, as well as young women's confidence in developing their own life styles.

When it comes to the exclusion of educated rural youth from the better-ranked urban jobs, women's exclusion is even greater. One problem is that although women's participation is comparatively high in the public sector, political patronage, nepotism, and corruption are crucial in obtaining a job (Hughes, 2014). For example, political influence plays a vital role in getting a public sector selection interview (Amarasuriya, 2015). This is hard for women to obtain. Women, especially women from the lower and middle class, are reluctant to seek political influence and their participation in election campaigns is limited (McCourt, 2000). This is because some politicians expect sexual favours in return for support. Moreover, politics in Sri Lanka is now seen as unclean and dangerous, and those who are involved are categorised as immoral and shameful. Educated rural youth, especially women, seek to protect their dignity by avoiding getting entangled with politicians, but this lowers their chances of securing a job either in the private or the public sector (Hughes, 2014). Even if women are lucky enough to get a public sector job, they are placed at lower organisational

levels and remain poorly represented in decision-making positions in the public sector (Jayatilake, 2005).

Another hindrance is women's educational specialisations. There is a belief that more technical fields are suitable only for men (Herath, 2015), so fewer women have qualifications in sciences and technology. Although women's first choice is usually the public sector, their other possible employment choice is the private sector, but there is no easy access (Fernando and Cohen, 2016). Like many rural men, women are educated in local languages, rather than English, which is used for official communication in the private sector (Hettige, 2004) and is a critical skill in selection decisions.

Another barrier faced by women seeking work, including middle class women, is difficulty in getting good jobs in fields like insurance, banking or communications, There are also fewer women in the sales and service sectors (Wickramasinghe and Jayathilake, 2006). These sectors seek to employ people who are free to travel, and who can stay overnight when travelling long distances. But in Sri Lanka women are expected to return home before dark, they do not stay overnight outside the home without family members and they do not drive long distances alone (Adikaram, 2014). Consequently, within the Sri Lankan social structure women cannot obtain such jobs. Instead young women are supposed to obtain other employment suitable for women, such as teaching, nursing or particular jobs withinbanking, such as tellers,which do not involve night work or travel. It is also important that the workplace ensures women's personal safety, that it is free of sexual harassment and has a good reputation (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). So women may be reluctant to take service sector jobs, and recruiters may be reluctant to appoint them.

Women's lives are also affected by religious teachings on femininity and masculinity, for instance the law of karma. Belief in karma has even led some senior women in Sri Lanka to describe their careers not as a personal choice but as a matter of destiny (Fernando and Cohen, 2013) (which of course also absolves them of the personal ambition considered unseemly for a woman). Fundamental Buddhist tenets such as karma and rebirth have been interpreted to prove men's superiority. According to the law of karma, one's past actions determine one's wealth, power, talent and, most significantly, one's sex in future birth. The Buddhist law of karma describes that one

is born as a woman because of one's bad karma (Dewaraja, 1981). Many women believe that they have to engage in meritorious deeds to rid themselves of the stain of womanhood and seek to be reborn as a man (Dewaraja, 1981).

Lord Buddha allows a place for women but there are certain limitations. Lord Buddha's preaching establishes that a woman cannot attain Buddhahood. Also woman Buddhist nuns, regardless of their age, have to respect even younger ordained monks (Thripitakaya.org). This practice persists in Sri Lanka and the monks (men) do not allow nuns to obtain the recognition as *Bhikkuni* (a woman monk). These assumptions and practices are deeply institutionalised, legitimising the subordination of women for the majority of the Sinhala community (Smits, 2011).

It is important to note, though, that women play critical roles in organising Buddhist rituals in public and private life, although these are assigned on a gender basis. For most of these ceremonies, Buddhist priests are invited to invoke blessings and women play a major role in organising these ceremonies (Fernando and Cohen, 2013). Other roles may be allocated to women because they involve domestic skills and status (Tagchungdarpa, 2015). Most of the hard work of cooking for hundreds of monks is done by women, for instance, but women are not permitted to carry the caskets in which the sacred relics of the lord Buddha are placed. Men carry the caskets and women walk behind them.

Another practice in which women participate is worshipping objects to gain Buddha's blessing. Worshiping objects possibly builds on Buddhists' worship of Buddha statues, and other statues depicting Buddhist and Hindu gods, Bo trees (the tree under which the lord Buddha attained enlightenment), and stupas (hemispherical structures containing relics of Buddha). Hindus worship the statutes of Hindu gods and some Christians worship the statues of Jesus and the saints. Another practice of Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims involves removing shoes before entering temples and mosques, but in contrast Christians wear shoes to churches. I mention these practices because they may influence workers' relationship to their employers, the machinery they work with, and the factory as a physical entity. Indeed the paying of respect through the elaborate practice of 'wandinawa' in Sinhala, translated as worship, by bowing deeply, pervades work life as well as other social spheres.

Finally we have to look at the main influence on women's subordination, kinship and family practices. The Sri Lankan kinship system is related to the Dravidian kinship system of South India, which in principle gives more status to women than North Indian family practices. However there is a great deal of variation within the system, and differences can be found between villages, even a few miles apart, with evidence of non-Dravidian forms (Widger, 2012).

From ancient times social relations in Sri Lanka have been coterminous with the social bonds of family, kinship group and religious community (Gamage, 2007), although there were some changes after colonisation(Palriwala, 1994). The household and the family still serve as the basic social and economic unit in agriculture, in particular, and social relations in general (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016). However, Sri Lankan women's lives within the family unit have been subject to change through the impact of modernisation (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016) and changing state policies (Jayaweera, 2003).

The majority of Sri Lankans still live in rural areas and most families, irrespective of ethnicity, still live in patrilocal residences (De Silva and Welgama, 2014).Most Sinhala families consist of a mother, father and children living in a household (Chapin, 2014). In the past both urban and rural women were responsible for cooking, washing, childcare, care of the elderly, and providing hospitality for relatives, neighbours and visitors. With women now working outside of the home, and away from home all day, this pattern is gradually changing. Although women are still responsible for most of the household chores, more men are involved in household chores especially in urban middle class families (Herath, 2015).

Within Sri Lanka's patriarchal social structure (Herath, 2015), in Sinhala families the father or the husband is the head of the family[9] and women are required to subordinate themselves at all times to men (Jayewardene, 2009).However male dominance within the family is arguably legitimated by male-dominant ideologies of the state, led by elite male politicians[10] (Amarasuriya, 2015). Moreover, male dominance is not limited

[9] Prior to British colonisation the 'Diga' marriage entitled a woman to fall back on the family of origin at any time and regain her dowry. This was the same for men in 'Binna' marriage. The introduction of state-sanctioned marriage by the British changed women's relatively independent position, as it has no provision for women to reclaim their dowry on divorce (Risseeuw, 1992; Palriwala, 1994)

[10] Even in the current parliament out of 225 members there are only 13 women (5.7%) https://www.parliament.lk/lady-members

to family and state, but is present in the larger community, business organisations and even in the trade unions of women-dominated professions (Kurian and Jayawardena, 2014). Girls are socialized within the family to become respectable women[11] who accept male dominance within the broader social structures (Fernando and Cohen, 2014).

The status of Tamil women, a minority, is the same or even worse. A Tamil woman is expected to preserve her family's good reputation and women are responsible for any kind of family misfortune. Women are the cultural regulators and are expected to raise daughters in a similar manner (Hrdlicková, 2011). Muslim women in Sri Lanka are also subject to socio-cultural constraints: although they are considered to have a higher status than Muslim women in some other countries, due especially to Sri Lankan Muslims promoting education for women[12](Mondal, 2004),they are subject to the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act (MMDA) of 1951 and the Quazi court system that was set up to administer it (Hamin and Issadin, 2016)[13].

The family is the main institution for socialising girls into appropriately feminine roles. From a young age girls are guided by their mother and other older women in the family on how to become and remain a 'respectable' woman, including instruction on how to think, behave and act. Maintaining respectability is accomplished mainly

[11]Before British rule, respectable women were those who were kept within the confines of the home. Women express the virtue of 'lajja-baya' (shame-fear). Lajja-baya has been described by the anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere (1984) as the fear of ridicule or social disapproval if failing to conform to sexual norms and proper behaviour. It is taught to children from an early age. Historical writings suggest that women enjoyed more freedoms in the past, and that virginity at the point of marriage wasnot as important in early colonial times (Risseeuw, 1992). In the late nineteenth century, towards the end of the British colonial era, a new notion of ethics and moralitydeveloped as a part of anti-colonial resistance (Obeyesekere and Gombrich 1988; Lynch 2004). The new social code of ethics shared many of its values with British Victorian codes of morality, but was at the same time a protest against the British's degradation of Sri Lankan culture and its 'natives' (Obeyesekere and Gombrich 1988). Because women were seen as vehicles for reproducing and reinforcing ethnic identities, women's morality became connected to the family's honour and the pride of the nation (Jayawardena 1992; de Mel 2001; Hewamanne 2007; Lynch 2007). Marriage and motherhood were highly valued, and codes of conduct for women included being chaste, submissive, and, if unmarried, a virgin and sexually ignorant (Cited in Jordal, 2014).

[12] Sir Razik Farid organised the movement for the education of Muslim women in Sri Lanka in the 20th century, and schools and colleges were established in different parts of the country(Rahim, 2004).

[13] This is due to enabling certain 'indigenous' laws, such as personal laws applicable for a specific community, which are parallel to the common and more secular law generally applicable to all citizens.Thus women face numerous issues such as lack of minimum age for marriage, dowry system, provision for divorce, polygamy, etc. (Hamin and Issadin, 2016).

through condemning unaccepted behaviour, and by men in the family taking up the role of protecting and guarding women. Women should know 'their limits' in relation to the physical distance to be maintained with men, the extent of relationships with men, specific behaviour in front of men, respectable dress code, and the extent of sharing information with men. Going beyond these limits is considered morally questionable behaviour and women are condemned or penalized if they behave in an unacceptable manner. Thus women are in a continuous struggle from their youngest days to be respectable and moral (Adikaram, 2014).

This ideology is most typical of the middle class, and indeed signifies middle class superiority yet the lower class also follow it (Hewamanne, 2008). The effort to keep women within their 'limits' relates to the continuing construction of women as reproducers, nurturers and disseminators of culture and the nation (De Alwis, 2002). Women as mothers are expected to carry forward the cultural and religious traditions within families with the financial support of men. Even the lullabies sung by Sri Lankan mothers cuddling babies to sleep are promoters of patriotism (Vithanage, 2015).

However expectations concerning respectability and morality hinder employed women's career progression, as within the world of work seeking to remain a respectable woman, according to the definitions above, may contradict the requirements of career progression (Fernando and Cohen, 2014). Women may therefore opt for a limited number of occupations, such as teaching (Kelleher, 2011). Jobs in garment factories are considered disrespectable and shameful (Hewamanne, 2008). Further, women are expected to return home before dark without participating in social gatherings late in the evening or at night (Fernando and Cohen, 2014).

De Munck (1999) argues that the ideology of kinship which held the village together (Patriarchal family control) is being threatened by women's migration from the family home (Hancock, 2006). This includes the internal migration of rural women, mostly daughters but some mothers, to Free Trade Zones in urban areas and external migration to Middle Eastern countries (Ekanayake and Guruge, 2016). Many of the rural young women from poor families who have moved to urban garment factories, especially in free trade zones, have become the primary family wage earner.

Migration allows women to change aspects of their gender roles and relation to their families. Many rural women have become independent daughters. They can adopt a different, more consumer-oriented life style and style of dress, and can choose to use cosmetics and enjoy music, dance, and film. Even their mannerisms and speech have changed (Hewamanna, 2003). They can spend time and money on themselves, including going to cinemas and beauty parlours for make-up and facials, and they have developed positive self-identities (Attanapola, 2006). As the breadwinners of families these women are in a position to pay for the construction of cement houses for their families to replace the mud huts in which they used to live, and they may help to pay for a sibling's education (Hancock, 2006). Some women have become entrepreneurs. In 2014, women accounted for 28,623 or 12.3% of 232,680 people in the category of employer (Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014). Yet despite supporting their families, women are shamed for risking their respectability, and blamed for any disruption in the family due to their absence (Abeyasekera and Jayasundere, 2015), especially child neglect, which is seen to lead to child truancy and child sexual abuse. They are also blamed if their husbands turn to alcohol or other women.

Patriotic Symbols and Practices

The state intervenes in regulating the social divisions I have described, interceding to favour some groups above other groups. Usually patriotism is called upon to subsume potential and actual conflicts between groups, including between employers and employees, in the garment industry as well as other sectors. To the extent that women play particular roles in patriotic ceremonies, these practices also convey meanings about the proper relations and hierarchy between men and women.

In Sri Lanka, explicit patriotic fervour is perceived to be an essential aspect of nation building. Sri Lankan political leaders have promoted national patriotism as the core ideology of the state since before independence (Wickramasinghe, 2009), with Buddhism as the unifying principle underlying the power of the state (Gaul, 2017). Nation building in Sri Lanka is intertwined with the centralising tendencies of the state, the deterioration of democratic norms, the alienation of youth from political and governance processes, and the continuing instability of the state (Gamage, 2007).

Patriotism therefore also legitimates the survival of elite political leaders (Amarasuriya, 2015).

In addition to the privileges Sinhala Buddhism enjoys under the constitution, the crushing of Tamil claims, and the increasing role of Buddhist monks in politics, there have also been successful moves to enshrine the Sinhala majority's position symbolically. For instance the national flag has been redesigned and changes made to the status of the national anthem. In 1978, the lion flag[14], as the national flag, and the Sinhala-language version of the national anthem, 'Sri Lanka Matha…….'[15], were incorporated into the constitution of Sri Lanka(Second and third schedules, The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 2015). Moreover, while the anthem was sung in both Sinhala and Tamil immediately after independence, the Sinhala version rapidly became dominant. It was only in 2016, as a gesture of reconciliation, that the new coalition government decided it should be sung in Sinhala and Tamil during national day celebrations. However,Sinhala Buddhist extremists groups criticising the government have argued that singing the national h in Tamil violates the Constitution (Ameen, 2016).

This controversy reflects the prominence given by the state to the national anthem and the national flag in Sri Lankan public life more generally, as well as the popularity of anthems as a way of signifying commitment to the nation. The national anthem is sung in schools and universities every morning, and on other ceremonial occasions and also in many public and private sector organisations, irrespective of the ethnic identity of owners or employees. Organisations, including garment companies, in addition have their own anthems (and sometimes their own flags), which are sung every day.

There is little literature analysing the purposes of national anthems (Hutt, 2012); what exists is suggestive, although it does not deal specifically with Sri Lanka. Veblen (2010) argues that anthems promote the ideologies of a country's dominant culture and reflect struggles to maintain the dominance of particular groups. Similarly,Elegnius (2005) points out that national anthems usually privilege only one way of expressing patriotism. Anthems often seek to evoke memories which inspire

[14]The Golden Lion represents Sinhala ethnicity, and the sword in its right forepaw stands for the authority and bravery of the nation.

[15]Matha is a similar word to 'mother' in Sinhala and the common word in Sinhala for mother is amma.

feelings of gratitude, along with national desires and goals as defined by those in power; they are tools for creating bonds and reinforcing goals among citizens(Cerulo, 1989).

In Sri Lanka several other patriotic practices permeate all spheres of life. For example everyone must take an oath or affirmation when assuming duties, including the president of the country, all public officers, judicial officers, parliamentary members and any other person as required by the constitution (Fourth schedule, The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 2015). Following this tradition, even some private sector organisations have made it a practice for employees to express commitment through pledges. Even ordinary employees in state and private sector workplaces may be expected to recite a pledge of loyalty every day, to the state and/or their employer.

Anthems, pledges and flags, and the cultural and patriotic values they embody, are well integrated into Sri Lanka's education system (Gaul, 2017). For example, during my school days school textbooks provided for free by the state had the national anthem and national flag printed in their opening pages. To perpetuate patriotism, the books highlight the ideal citizen as a person who respects the rulers of the country unquestioningly. Gaul's (2017) analysis of school history textbooks found that historical narratives reiterate the dominance of Sinhalese, their culture and religion (Buddhism), thereby neglecting minority communities. For instance, history books published for Grades 7–11 by the Educational Publications Department between 2007 and 2009 presented the Sinhalese as the natural rulers of the country who protect the Sinhalese Buddhist nation. This is an attempt to legitimise the current political realities in Sri Lanka.

There are other cultural initiatives which also disseminate or oppose nationalist ideology. In Sri Lanka live theatre is a significant mode of disseminating nationalist ideologies, thematising complicated power hierarchies, transmitting hegemonic ideologies of the nation and expressing political dissent. Within the theatre gender identities are complexly interwoven into an exclusionary Sinhala, Buddhist, religio-cultural identity. Significantly, the mother figure is prominent and her biological and social functions signify the expectations of the nation (Silva, 2000).

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed some of the events, practices and pressures that have affected the lives of women who work in the garment industry of Sri Lanka. Radical economic reforms, such as introducing liberal economic policies on export and import, are the most significant, contributing to moving rural women's labour from agriculture and cottage industries to capitalist firms in the export-oriented garment industry, especially within free trade zones (Athukorala and Jayasuriya, 2012). Where before the state supported rural production financially, including farming and cottage industries, these are now only facilitated, leading to the loss of job opportunities for educated rural youth in state employment (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009). The private sector, which is now growing much faster than the public sector, contributes to widening social inequalities by excluding the rural poor from white-collar jobs (Fernando and Cohen, 2016). The claims for Buddhist sovereignty over the whole country has led to ethnic disharmony and horrific bloodshed (Gamage, 2007) in the Civil War. It also led to so many human rights abuses that GSP Plus, the international duty concessionary facility awarded by the European Union, was cancelled (Bandara and Naranpanawa, 2015). As a result, thousands of rural women lost jobs due to factory closure.

Gender identity intersects with other identities, with many ramifications for women, including the ties and oppressions of social class, religion and ethnicity. I have reviewed the existing literature on social class and religious and ethnic divisions, as well as recent literature on how women may be affected in gender-specific ways. I have also given attention to conflicts over women's participation in the garment industry, which may represent a new degree of self-confidence for women – and in the free trades zones, new lifestyles. While facing social stigma, due to the bad image of women working in industry (Amarasuriya, Gunduz and Mayer, 2009), economic independence is challenging the patriarchal control of young women in the family (Hancock, 2006). However, women's rights and status as employees in the garment industry are very limited. This thesis will explore how their workplaces are managed and the consequences for women's working and family lives.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Although organisational processes may incorporate patriarchal power, previous research on the garment industry in Sri Lanka has not paid much attention to the extent to which organisational structures, processes and procedures reproduce (within the organisations) gender and other social inequalities which are present in the wider society. In fact there is no such study of factories in Sri Lanka which looks at this, and none which studies the experiences of the same individuals within the factory and within the home. Hence my research questions attempt to address both these dimensions of inequality:

1. What inequality regimes characterise garment-producing factories in Sri Lanka?
    (i) What are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?
    (ii) What other factors affect the reproduction of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?
2. Is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan garment factories?

To briefly summarise my research design at the outset: my ontological stance is that gender is a social construction rather than a natural consequence of biological difference. I chose three garment factories as multiple case studies. Using personal contacts I gained access to these three organisations and undertook 36 interviews, with an equal number of women and men at different organisational levels, supplemented by observations. Following data collection, interview recordings were transcribed and the transcripts and fieldwork notes were analysed using different levels of coding. The research process was reflexive, andestablished sociological ethical guidelines were followed.

In this chapter I explain the different steps of designing and carrying out the research. The chapter begins with my justification for using qualitative methods followed by my case study strategy. I discuss how I conducted the fieldwork, which included interviewing and observations. I then explain how I produced written transcripts of the interviews and how I analysed the data. Finally I discuss my reflexive approach, which shows my awareness of problems in the fieldwork process, and how I tried to ensure an ethical approach regarding the research participants.

Qualitative Methods

The aim of my research is to uncover women's and men's experiences of inequalities at work in the garment industry of Sri Lanka, and the processes and procedures through which wider inequalities in Sri Lankan society are reproduced within the factory and in the family. As explained in chapter one, I also wanted to explore how factory management obtains the compliance and consent of workers so that its output goals are met. I also wanted to talk to employees about their domestic lives, so that they could explain how paid work shaped family relations.

All this requires a research design that can capture real life experiences in the words of the participants, and which enables me to observe interactions in the factory and, as far as possible, the processes which underwrite an inequality regime. To facilitate my intentions I selected qualitative methods because qualitative methods are intended to uncover the complexities of situations (Hankivsky, 1999), and to enable the researcher to produce authoritative and valid knowledge about participants' experiences in their natural setting (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002; Creswell, 2013). Further, qualitative methods offer a voice to participants because the data consists, mainly, of their own perceptions of their experiences in their own words (Bluhm *et al.,* 2010). Moreover, in qualitative research it is possible to alter some data gathering methods as the process unfolds. The research has an ethnographic element because it uses observations at multiple case study factories (Reeves *et al.,* 2008). However, using interviews and observations needs careful consideration as ethical issues are very challenging. This is because power relations between the researcher and the participants are embedded in the research process. In addition, one must be wary of the problems that may arise for participants because of the different power relations between them. Informed consent is an integral part of the ethics of qualitative research (Wiles*et al*., 2007). How

I dealt with ethical issues is discussed later in this chapter. Finally, although some researchers have questioned whether findings in qualitative research are generalizable (Atieno, 2009), I disagree. Bluhm *et al*. (2010) argue that qualitative methods capture social experiences that can be generalised to a larger population, or which provide insights that may be relevant to similar situations. My critical review of the methods I selected gives me confidence that the research design I adopted is appropriate for the study of inequalities at work.

Case Study Strategy

> The case study is a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 532).

A case study consists of a detailed investigation of one or more organisations, or groups within organisations, with a view to providing an analysis of the context and processes involved in the phenomenon under study and the relations between them (Meyer, 2001). Contextual conditions have to be covered (Yin, 1994; Creswell, 2013); I am studying organisations in a country of the global South, using conceptual frameworks developed for studying organisations and factories in the global North, so context is particularly important. Case studies explore processes and behaviours that may be little understood to answer 'how' and 'why' questions (Meyer, 2001). Most of my research questions relate to how inequalities are incorporated in employment practices. I selected multiple case studiesto explore the similarities and differences in how inequalities within organisations are constructed, maintained and possibly resisted. This is because case studies allow the researcher to analyse both within and across settings (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Each case may produce similar findings, but they may also produce different findings, which will provide the opportunity to identify some of the elements that lead to differences as well as similarities. Another reason why I selected case studies is because this method allows researchers to combine a variety of data sources, such as interviews and observations. I believe that the use of case studies is the right choice to understand inequalities at work.

Case Study Selection

There are approximately 300-350 garment factories functioning under the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka and situated within and outside Free Trade Zones (FTZs) (Export Development Board, 2016); according to Prasanna and Kuruppuge (2013) approximately 55% of these factories are located in the Western province of the country. It is difficult to provide even an approximate proportion of garment factories located within or outside FTZs because there are no recent comprehensive surveys of garment factories in Sri Lanka (Prasanna and Kuruppuge, 2013). I chose all three case studies from factories outside of the FTZs because most of the previous studies have been done in factories within FTZs and I am interested in understanding the experiences of women in factories outside FTZs. Factories in FTZs and those outside them have the same operational and administrative processes but the management of the factories and working conditions may differ. This is because factories in FTZs have to meet specific requirements, such as safety measures and compliance standards set by foreign buyers, because these factories serve foreign markets. Further, the majority of women working in FTZs leave their families to stay in boarding houses in the neighbourhood of the factories (Hewamanne, 2003). Most of the existing literature about young women factory workers' relative independence from their families, and also their 'bad reputation' for sexual transgressions, is based on that sector. However, women working in factories outside the FTZs usually travel to work from home every day (Lynch, 1999a) or stay in company-maintained hostels, but return home frequently. I also considered that factory owners might form different relations with their factories if the factory were more integrated into the wider community. These differences might result in differences of management styles, or the forms inequalities take either in the factories or in workers' relations with their families.

A second issue in case study research is determining the boundaries of the case. For instance, I had to decide whether to study whole companies, or whether to take individual factories within the company as my unit of analysis. I decided to choose the company as the unit of analysis because I wanted to study the head office of each company as well as an example of their factories. Two companies I studied own a number of factories, so one factory was chosen from each company. The smallest company had no separate head office, as its administrative work was done in a room located within the factory.

I selected the cases purposefully rather than randomly (Crabtree and Miller, 1992 cited in Meyer, 2001). Most garment factories in Sri Lanka share common characteristics, such as a labour force with a majority of women, production involving a lot of repetitive work, and long hours of work with compulsory overtime. But other characteristics may differ, such as size, location, ownership, and product market. Firstly, an exact categorisation of the factories in relation to their size cannot be found, because in Sri Lanka there is no clear definition of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Size may be judged along different criteria by different government agencies, such as number of employees and size of investment (Gamage, 2000). The number of employees is the most common criterion used. According to the Export Development Board, in Sri Lanka (2016) there are garment manufacturers under the large-scale category as well as small and medium scale category. Most of the export-oriented clothing factories are SMEs, so I chose a mixture of large and small factories.

Secondly, I decided to choose case study organisations in different types of geographical areas, in case the locality made a difference to, for instance, the availability of labour. I chose one whose head office and factory was located in an urban area, one whose combined office and factory were located in a suburb of Colombo and one whose head office was in a suburban area but the factory in a rural area.

Thirdly, with regard to type of ownership, I recognised that there might be differences between foreign and locally owned garment-producing companies. I did not have access to any foreign-owned companies, but I was at least able to choose companies serving different product markets. One organisation serves the local market while the other two supply an international market.

I also decided to consider the owners' ethnicity and gender. These aspects have been little studied. I thought that these aspects were particularly relevant in Sri Lanka because of the strong ethnic and religious divisions in Sri Lanka, and the possibility that one or other might be favoured by the government or regulators. This made me choose owners of different ethnicities. My personal experience as a woman academic is that women manage differently than men do and this encouraged me to include a woman owner.

To incorporate the variation in size, location, ownership (gender and ethnicity) and product market, I chose three factories owned by the three companies listed in Table 3.1. (The names of the companies are all pseudonyms.) I obtained access to all of them because of my own, or my husband's, personal contacts with the owners of the case study factories, which I discuss under the section on access. The following table illustrates the characteristics of the three case studies.

Table 3. 1 Characteristics of the Three Case Study Organisations

Muhammad's Clothing	**Amma's Fashions**	**Rama's Shirts**
Large (more than 10,000 employees)	Medium (around 5000 employees)	Small (around 40 employees)
13 factories in Sri Lanka and 2 factories in a Middle Eastern country	5 factories in Sri Lanka	One factory in Sri Lanka
Owned by a Muslim/Islamic man	Owned by a Sinhalese/ Buddhist/widowed woman	Owned by a Tamil/Hindu man
International retailer market (e.g. Gap, Marks and Spencer, etc.)	International retailer market (e.g. Ralph Lauren, Sainsbury, etc.)	Local buyers (three leading clothing stores)
HQ and factory were located in an urban area (Colombo)	HQ located in a suburban area, factory located in a rural area (remote place in Kurunegala)	Factory located in a suburban area (Sri Jayewardenepura, Kotte)

The characteristics listed above incorporate a range of features found in garment factories outside of the FTZs. These characteristics might have consequencesfor the forms taken by inequalities in the factories. For example, closer relations between employer and employee might be possible in smaller organisations when the number of employees is lower and there is less pressure to meet targets when serving the local market. A woman running a business might do so differently, although the evidence for this is mixed, for instance, Wacjman's (1998) study of managers in the UK found that women ended up 'managing like a man'.

With three case studies, the management of organisational processes such as hiring, promotions, everyday social interactions, etc., within the organisation can be compared across each organisation's different levels as well as between organisations. I hoped that the case studies would be able to provide a sufficient and comprehensive picture of the common characteristics of garment factories functioning outside FTZs, as well as some clues to explaining the differences between them, which might apply to other factories in Sri Lanka.

Access

Obtaining access to private sector organisations in Sri Lanka is not easy, because owners do not want outsiders to obtain knowledge about how they manage their organisations. I managed to resolve this issue by building on my social status as a middle class woman and a senior university teacher alongside my husband's status as a government employee and a trade union leader. In Sri Lanka the only method of gaining access to the private sector (especially to interview employees and to observe daily happenings) is through personal contacts with top management. I am aware that use of personal contacts is not possible for those who are not a part of an elite social class in the business community. Thus my social status gave me privileged access, but for researchers who are less well connected the need to rely on personal contacts is in itself a form of inequality.

The process of obtaining access may tell the researcher something about the environments they study (Burgess *et al*., 1994). Although I used personal contacts in all three cases, the owners took different approaches in giving me access, which provided an initial clue to their management style. Two of the owners are personal friends of my husband, with whom he goes out for dinner, and the woman owner is a family friend. I also had former students of mine working as managers at Muhammad's Clothing. When I asked to study employment in their companies, the Managing Director (MD) of Muhammed's Clothing, Mr Az, immediately accepted without consulting anyone else. Mr Az is a friend of my husband's and he did not request any written evidence regarding my study but straightaway introduced me to Mr A, the group HR manager[16] and asked him to facilitate my research. Mr Az's

[16] Mr A is the head of HR for all 13 local factories and the 2 foreign factories owned by Muhammed's Clothing.

approach in granting permission suggests from the outset that he had the power to make decisions single-handedly and in an informal way. Similarly Mr Jay, the owner of the smallest factory is also a friend of my husband, and did not ask about the study or for any documents but introduced me to the manager and asked him to facilitate my work. In contrast, at Amma's Fashions the chairwoman, Ms R, took more care. She inquired about the study, its relevance to the employees and to the industry in general and only then, when assured of my intentions, introduced me to her secretary and asked her to facilitate my work. During the fieldwork I had permission to enter and exit all of the organisations at any time, as well as the opportunity to sit in on managerial meetings and selection interviews. Muhammad's Clothing has a training program called 'Ladder – PACE' (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement) for women workers, conducted in each factory. I was given the opportunity to observe the training sessions and to observe a trainers' workshop. I also obtained permission to visit one of the women's hostels owned by Muhammad's Clothing and the homes of rural women workers at Amma's Fashions.

Selection of Data Collection Methods

I purposefully selected interviews and observations to obtain multiple sources of evidence (Iacono, 2011). Given the limitations of time and budget I decided that interviews and observations would enable me to hear about participants' experiences in their own words, and also the opportunity to see interactions between the employees myself. In addition having two sources of data adds richness to information and makes cross-verification possible. Like Acker (2006) I think that case study methodology with an ethnographic element is useful for a study that focuses on a range of intersecting social inequalities because it is based on the participants' experiences and the researcher's observations and enables the researcher to compare the differences in inequalities between different organisations.

Interviews

Although my main interest is in women's experiences I decided to conduct in-depth, semi-structured interviews with both women and men in order to understand their experiences at work. This was because women and men might have different experiences and interpretations of inequality. Interviews were essential because the forms taken by inequalities are not necessarily directly observable, but talking to

people allows them to relate their experiences and how they feel about them. Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful (Bryman, 2016) as they allow more scope for clarifications because the interview proceeds as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Further, an interview is an interactive process and the interviewer can probe to clarify answers and both the interviewer and interviewee can go into depth on topics that emerge during the interviews (Bryman, 2016).

Sampling interviewees

To cover a wide range of experiences in relation to inequalities at work I aimed at diversity inmy sample of employees. In each company I selected an equal number of men and women. Men were included to understand their own experiences of social inequality or indeed how they might contribute to inequality as managers. I tried to give more weight to the experiences of factory floor employees, and to include employees from the lower, middle and top management levels of each organisation, including the factory owners at Amma's, Muhammed's and Rama's. By including respondents from different organisational levels I also hoped for a fair representation of Sri Lanka's different social classes within the interview sample. I also chose to interview people with more than one year of work experience. I assumed that having one year of experience would enable a participant to talk about annual happenings such as promotions, bonus, increments, etc. On reflection this was a mistake, though, and limited my sample, as it prevented me from interviewing people who quit their job (or were fired) before they had been there a year. Such people may have had worse experiences of the company than those whom I chose to interview, or alternatively, had more options for finding a job elsewhere.

I had to decide on a practicable, workable sample size, as I had only nine months for data collection. I ended up with a sample of 36 participants, eighteen women and eighteen men, with six women and six men from each organisation. To give weight to the experience of shop floor workers I initially decided to select six employees (three women and three men) at each factory from the factory floor and a woman and a man from lower, middle and top management levels – so 12 from each factory.

Although my intention was to produce more information from interviews with factory floor employees, once I entered the field I realized that there are certain women and men in supervisory or managerial roles who play a particularly strong role in employee-management relations. This made me deviate from the initial sample targets and to decide whom to interview by observing the daily happenings for about five days at the beginning of my fieldwork in each organisation. For example, I decided to interview Ms K, the counsellor at Muhammad's Clothing, because she seemed to handle factory employees in a harsh manner. However, I could not get permission from the HR department to interview her. (I came to know that at one time she was a machinist and had tried to form a union. The company then offered her the post of counsellor and successfully dissuaded her from forming a union. This made me understand that the company did not want to reveal certain things to outsiders. Later, however, I managed to chat with her informally.)

There were also other limits on whom I interviewed. As discussed before, I selected employees with at least one year of experience. This forced me to change the composition of the sample in all three organisations, as I had difficulty in finding men at a factory floor level with one year of experience. This is because in all three organisations approximately 92% of machinists are women, and there are very few men who stay as long as a year. Thus, to ensure I had 36 interviewees, I selected either a man helper or an ironer or a supervisory-level man with experience of more than one year.Due to the needs of woman machinist to meet their daily targets I also had an issue finding an available time to conduct interviews with them, and their supervisors were often not willing to release them from work. I got round this by interviewing some of the women on Sundays in their hostels, and others soon after their tea or lunch break.

The proportion of women and men at each level in the sample is given in Table 3.2. I did not chose participants to interview on the very first day of my fieldwork in each factory but selected the interviewees by chatting with and observing their interactions. I discovered that almost all the women supervisors had initially joined as machinists and been promoted to supervisor. In contrast male supervisors were recruited directly as supervisors. This made me decide to include more women supervisors as respondents as they have wide experience as both machinists and supervisors and work

closely with other women. Also I found that women talked to me freely, but men at a supervisory level were not friendly. They seemed to be suspicious about my presence, and I feared that they might not be willing to open up in their interviews. However, I managed to interview four men at the supervisory level who participated willingly. With the above limitations I interviewed the sample given in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 Number of People in Interview Sample

	Factory Level and Lower Management				Middle Mgt.		Top Mgt.		Total
	Sewing		Supervision						
	Women	Men	W	M	W	M	W	M	
Muhammad's	2	1	3	1	1	1	0	3	12
Amma's	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	12
Rama's	4	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	12
% of respondents at each level	22%	11%	20%	11%	6%	8%	3%	19%	100%
	33%		31%		14%		22%		100%

Following my initial decision to give more weight to the factory floor level, 33% of those I interviewed were from the factory floor (comprised of 22% women and 11% men). With my decision to include more women supervisors I ended up with 20% women and 11% men at supervisory level. At the top management level I had 19% men and 3% women.

Interview Schedule

I selected semi-structured interviews to enable the interviewees to express their views freely. To ensure I obtained the same information from all of the participants I used an interview schedule as a guide (See Appendix 1- Interview Schedule). It included questions on several areas to shed light on the research questions. For example, to get to know what respondents do at work I asked about the nature of their job; to understand the types of interactions experienced I asked them to talk about relations at work, I also had questions about hiring, promotion and grievances to capture the

nature of these processes and their effects for the employees of different levels. I also asked about certain personal information such as age, marital status, past work experience, educational qualifications, spouse and/or parents and children.

Before leaving for Sri Lanka for fieldwork, to ensure that the interview guideline questions would produce data relevant to my research questions, and was clear to potential interviewees, I conducted an interview in English on 'Skype' with a young woman middle-level manager of a leading garment organisation in Sri Lanka. After transcribing it I realised that there had been a few misunderstandings due to the language barrier. Thus, as soon as I came to Sri Lanka, I conducted another pilot interview, face-to-face, in Sinhala, with a middle-aged man, a general manager of another garment factory. Transcription of it suggested that the use of Sinhala improved the data quality. This made me decide to conduct interviews in Sinhala.

Although I used an interview guide I am aware that in qualitative interviewing, interviewers can significantly depart from the interview guide (Bryman, 2016). This happened to me several times. For example, my study concentrates on factories situated outside FTZs but several participants started comparing their experiences in factories in FTZs. This was a significant and related issue so I encouraged them to narrate their stories.

Information Sheet and Consent Form

To make sure participants understood the purposes of the study and how their participation would be incorporated in the findings, I developed an information sheet that described the nature of the research and how the data would be used within my academic work (See Appendix 2 – Information Sheet).I also prepared a consent form to be read and signed by the respondents prior to each interview (See Appendix 3 – Consent Form). I will discuss the ethical component of the information sheet and the consent form later in the chapter. I translated both documents into Sinhala as most of the participants could not read English. At the beginning of every interview, I first introduced myself. I told participants that I am a university teacher, studying for a higher degree in a university in the UK, and a mother of a teenage son. I also gave a brief description of the research and explained briefly the nature of the study and potential risks and benefits of being a participant. A risk might be s/he might reveal

highly personal information which might affect her/him emotionally, and indeed a few participants did cry or sob during the course of the interview. A benefit may be the satisfaction of contributing to an educational purpose by sharing her/his knowledge. Then I asked them to read the fact sheet, taking their own time. Finally I requested them to sign the consent form if they were willing to participate. I also informed them that they were free to withdraw at any time during the interview if they felt like doing so. Although the consent form mentions my taping the interview, before each interview I again requested their permission to tape-record the interviews.

Most of the 36 interviews were conducted in Sinhala, with five conducted in English. All three owners preferred English to Sinhala and another Muslim male manager from Muhammad's Clothing and a Sinhalese male manager from Amma's Fashions requested to conduct their interviews in English. I imagine that all these participants speak Sinhala well, but by using English they may have been attempting to display their social status, asspeaking English is an indicator of higher status.

Conducting Interviews

In all three organisations I had the opportunity to conduct interviews in private, in a separate room in which nobody else was present, which minimized disturbances and ensured privacy. At Muhammad's Clothing interviews with the top managers were held in their respective rooms, and most other interviews with supervisors and managers were held in the training room called the 'Ladder' room. Interviews with the women machinists were held on a Sunday in the sitting room of the women's hostel. At the head office of Amma's Fashions, the interviews took place in the managers' offices, in the office of the chairwoman and in the meeting room. The interview with the chairwoman herself was held at her residence. In Amma's remote factory, managers were interviewed in their offices, and the others in the meeting room adjoining the HR department. At Rama's Shirts the owner and the manager were interviewed in their offices, the storekeeper and supervisor in the storeroom, and the others in the tea room. The time taken for interviews varied between 30 minutes to one and a half hours. Interviews with lower level employees lasted between thirty minutes and one hour. This is because they did not have information with regard to some of the questions, such as leave entitlements, incentives, promotions, or trade unions. For example most of them were unaware of their leave entitlements, how

incentive payments were calculated, the presence of unions, etc. At the middle and top management levels interviews were a bit longer, from 45 minutes to one and a half hours.

To build a good rapport with the participants I did a number of things to put them at ease. I was conscious that my personal acquaintanceship with the owners or managers might hinder the development of a relationship with the interviewees so I tried to avoid talking to or associating with either the owners or the managers in front of employees. Moreover, I tried to fit my appearance to the way I introduced myself, as a teacher, a mother and a researcher. This is because of the norm of respectability for women in Sri Lanka, which I discussed in Chapter 2, and will mention again under the section on reflexivity concerning presentation of self. In Sri Lanka talking in English reflects and enhances social status so I also avoided talking in English with managers. Instead I tried to minimize power differences by showing that although I came from a different social background I was a woman whom they could trust and share their experiences with. For this reason, I did not do any interviews at the very beginning of my fieldwork in each factory, but spent about five days observing things and developing relationships with employees. During that time I went with them for lunch and tea and while hanging around chatted about their families, sicknesses, and work-family balance.

In retrospect I feel that I was particularly successful in making people feel comfortable talking about their personal lives, and they made use of the interview as an opportunity to disclose certain suppressed feelings to someone they felt able to trust. For instance, they talked about love affairs, broken marriages, an inability to have children, and the effects of evil spirits on their lives. Following are some of the incidents that I can highlight to show this. At Muhammad's Clothing, a young woman HR executive, Ms T, discussed her relationship with me. She said that her boyfriend is from a lower caste and that initially her parents rejected him, but now they have given their consent. She said she did not discuss this issue with anyone in the organisation. A payroll executive, Mr Rak, told me that he had broken up with his girlfriend due to an argument between them about two months back and he was still suffering. While discussing the issue he broke into tears but said he did not feel shy as he thought of me like his mother. At Amma's Fashions, Ms Rosh, a middle-aged woman (secretary to the chairwoman) and

Ms Shri (a supervisor) told me how sad she and her husband were for not having children. At Rama's Shirts, Ms Niro, a middle-aged woman (a machinist) discussed how her husband had beaten her and left when her son was only an infant, but that she had been able to make something of her life afterwards. She also told me that she was under the influence of an evil spirit and showed me the 'suraya' (a metal cylinder with a power to control an evil spirit) that she wore in a string around her hip.

The interviewees did not seem to hesitate to discuss aspects of work relations, especially their resentments at being shouted at and their intentions to leave their jobs as a result. Some of the respondents had criticisms of organisational processes and practices. For example at Muhammad's Clothing, Ms Sew (Trainee HR and Compliance Coordinator) told me that she has been working for more than an year but still her designation as a trainee has not changed. At Amma's Fashions, Mr Osh (knowing my relationship with the Chairwoman) was critical about the promotional procedure, and said it is very informal. Mr S, the mechanic at Rama's Shirts, knowing that I have a personal contact with the owner, told me that he is not happy with his salary. Sometimes these employees may have expected me to intercede with the owners. At Rama's Shirts Ms L, the storekeeper, asked me whether it is possible for me to talk to the owner regarding the labour shortage in the company at present. She thought that he might listen to my opinion because I am an academic from a management background. I told her very politely that I cannot intervene without a request from him. Many respondents told me that it was not necessary to use the consent form, as they trusted me as a university teacher. No one refused to participate or objected to tape-recording. On reflection I think that all of the respondents participated willingly because they laughed, cried and shared highly personal happenings with me, and, despite knowing my relationship with the owners, they criticised certain happenings in factories such as aggressive and abusive behaviour.

Observations

Taking advantage of being in a position to observe the case study factories I was able to see differences between the factories in their physical facilities. I will discuss these in chapter four. I also had the opportunity to observe events such as management meetings, selection interviews, training programs and annual ceremonies.

Spending a lot of time in each factory supplemented the interviews and allowed me to observe what people do in their natural settings(Kawulich, 2005). Occasionally, I managed to capture differences between what was said in interviews and what participants really do. For example, Mr A (Group HR manager at Muhammad's Clothing, an ex-army officer) in his interview said that he respects his mother a lot and he maintains the same attitude to all women. In contrast, on several occasions I saw him shouting at young women HR executives and he said sarcastic things to women. I wrote my observations in fieldnotes during the day and added to them every evening. Fieldnotes are important in ethnographic research because the observations are written as notes to be used in the analysis (Wolfinger, 2002). I always had a notebook with me so that I could make notes then and there. I tried to use Sinhala to write down notes because I could use the exact words that had been spoken. However, sometimes I used English longhand script, as I did not want anybody to be able to read what I had written. This is because I noted down unkind behaviour and happenings as well as kindly ones. An ordinary person reading those notes might consider them as collecting gossip rather than academic work. Not using Sinhala was a limitation but I avoided it by writing important Sinhala words in English. For example in Sinhala 'palayan' is considered rude language, which I heard a manager shout when he meant 'Get out!'

My priority was to observe interactions between managers and the shop floor workers to understand how power relations operate. As a result I have many fieldnotes on interactions between manager and workers, especially women. This has enabled me to discuss the subtleties of management-worker power relations between managers and workers. This also enabled me to choose interviewees, as discussed earlier.

Transcribing the Interviews and Data Analysis

With the satisfaction of completing fieldwork I faced the challenge of transcribing interviews, organising my fieldnotes and analysing the data. This section discusses how I handled these tasks.

Preparing Transcripts

It was a hard task to handle a large volume of data, and one of the major challenges I faced was transcribing the 36 interviews. I was determined to complete transcribing the interviews from each organisation by the end of the fieldwork in that organisation. To achieve my target I always kept time slots freethroughout the data collection stage.

Transcribing interviews early enabled me to identify any weaknesses in interviewing at an early stage of the fieldwork, and to gradually improve my interviewing skills.

I did some of the transcripts of the interviews at Muhammad's Clothing on Sundays and to do the balance I took a break for one week from visiting the factories. The Sinhala and Hindu New Year fell between my fieldwork at the head office and the remote factory of Amma's Fashions, so this gave me another opportunity to transcribe, as all the garment factories in Sri Lanka were on holiday. While travelling to the factory in the remote area I had time to do some transcripts and amplify my fieldnotes, and the remainder I completed during weekends. This is because although I drove to other factories, I did not drive when travelling to the remote factory but hired a driver. I had time in the evenings to complete my fieldnotes, and to transcribe interviews from Rama's Shirts as the travelling time in both directions was less than half an hour.

Ultimately, I had 36 recorded interviews and their transcripts, 31 transcripts in Sinhala and five in English. Supplementing the interviews I also had six exercise books filled with handwritten fieldnotes, and some Word documents of fieldnotes I had typed up at home. I left Sri Lanka and flew to the University of Warwick, UK, carrying these valuable resources for the analysis and writing stage.

Data Analysis

The main objective of the study is to understand the socio-organisational processes that affect the different forms taken by inequalities at work. I hoped that the data would enable me to analyse the

i. lived experiences of women and men working in factories,

ii. attitudes prevailing among women and men in factories,

iii. similar or varying patterns of relations that reproduce gender subordination, and resistance to management.

Beginning the analysis was very confusing as it was not something I had done before. Under the guidance of my supervisors I started analysing the data manually. With the intention of grounding theory in data, as the first step of the coding process, I started identifying the most common themes emerging from the interviews which seemed sociologically interesting. I went throughthe interviews and out of the 36 interviews I

identified 152 common themes as well as their frequency of occurrence (See Appendix 4 – Common Themes). A careful analysis of these themes enabled me to group most of the themes into broader categories relating to social and organisational processes. At the second level of the analysis I had 45 common codes with their frequency of occurrence. At the third level I was able to identify broader themes that represented most of the themes from the second stage, and I ended up with 19 codes with their frequency of occurrence (See Appendix 5 - Codes). To complement the thematic analysis and to bring to the surface elements of implicit resistance, such as favoritism in promotions, the use of personal influence in hiring, etc., I conducted a further analysis. Accordingly, responses were selected for fourteen issues, such as reasons for choosing the garment industry and the company, previous jobs, the hiring and selection process, the promotion process, relations at work, whether they had changed jobs, and what they did to retain their job (See Appendix 6 – Issues Addressed).

I also organised the fieldnotes made at the three organisations chronologically. From the notebooks I entered my daily notes into computer files, in Sinhala as well as in English. Combining fieldnotes with the analysis of interviews, I started writing the empirical chapters. First I concentrated on writing the three chapters about each organisation, and arranged the data into four broad themes with sub-themes as follows.

1. Impact of organizational culture in shaping employee behavior, with sub-themes such as daily requirements, annual ceremonies, forms of address, behavioral expectations and so on.
2. Construction of the labour force. Recruitment, hiring, promotion, discipline, division of labour are some of the sub-themes.
3. Social interactions in the workplace.
4. Agency, acquiescence and resistance. Some of the sub-themes were the decision to quit work, and forms of individual agency and collective resistance.

It was only after drafting the chapters that I was able to look at the data on each organization as a whole, and found myself in a position to characterize the inequality regime of each factory, and explore further how its elements fit together.

I then moved on to the chapter on the relationship between work and family for the participants. I was able to identify sub-themes, such as work decisions, contribution to the household and the consequences of the ideology of women's respectability.

Reflexivity

Research is a reflexive process since a researcher's presence affects the field, and the field in turn affects the researcher. Therefore researchers need to question their decisions, experiences and interpretations to assess to what extent their interests, position and assumptions are influencing the research process. Reflexivity is inherently connected to all actions as well as decisions made, and it is a part of the sense-making process which as researchers we engage in with the participants. Thus as a reflexive researcher I was conscious about my choice of methods, my role in the research, my relationships with the participants, and how my social position affected the research process (Burman *et al.*, 2001; Fitzgerald 2004).For example, my social class and educational background might have had negative impacts on my relationships with the respondents but I developed a good rapport with the participants. Thus I attempted to behave in ways that made power relations less apparent and positioned myself as a teacher; the participants were looking up to me but they also became very friendly. This may be because they may have found me more approachable and a humble women whom they can trust. Some women knowing my personal contacts with the top managers asked me whether I could get a job for them in some other factory.

A reflexive researcher has to understand that as a researcher s/he has a certain amount of power in relation to the participants (Wilkinson, 1988; Etherington, 2007). My social status as a middle class woman, an academic and a researcher studying in the United Kingdom gave me status, but I believe that respondents are more powerful as they possess the implicit knowledge of what I seek to study, and they can decide to share it with me or not. I also needed to be aware of and critical about my own biases and assumptions, and how these influenced the potential outcomes of my research (Mills *et al*., 2010).

One of the things a fieldworker has to consider is that his or her presentation of self has an influence on the research process (Braun and Clarke, 2013), and I gave this quite a lot of thought. In Sri Lanka, teachers are considered by many in society as role

models. Similarly, society expects adult women to dress in a so-called 'respectable manner', and to behave 'properly' within socially acceptable 'limits'. If I was to gain acceptance I had to be sure to appear to be a 'respectable woman', which actually in my daily life I do not bother with very much, as I think this self-presentation often reproduces patriarchal norms of femininity. However, during fieldwork I attempted to fit in to the accepted norms through my dress, speech and behaviour. I wore high-necked, long tops with long sleeves and loose trousers and wore no makeup. I also brushed my hair properly, and did not wear costume jewellery, which might be seen as 'flashy'. I always carried a simple black handbag and wore serious-looking black or brown sandals with no decorations. For the annual ceremonial occasions at the organisations I wore the national dress, a saree, and mostly expensive silk sarees. While associating with the respondents I tried to talk softly and choose words to be polite. Even when seated I ensured that I kept my legs together so that no one would criticise my comportment. Even when someone cracked a joke I was conscious of controlling my laughter. I believe that I was successful in my attempt because at the annual celebrations at Muhammad's Clothing, seeing me wearing a saree Mr A called some young women who were around and told them that he observed my attire and behaviour. According to him I always wore respectable clothes that properly cover the body and knew my 'limits' and the young women should do so too. I recognised this as an example of Mr A underlining the importance of patriarchally defined femininity as a way to be successful in work.

Along with my success, however, my attempt to be respectable may have inhibited some employees telling me less respectable things. In Sri Lanka, women garment workers usually wear multi-coloured frocks or tops with jeans or skirts of contrasting colours, lots of jewellery, sandals with coloured straps, bead necklaces and they carry handbags of dark but vivid colours, such as purple or green, and wear a lot of make-up (Hewamanne, 2003). Although I could not myself dress this way, as at my age I would have looked absurd, I am a little worried that by positioning myself as so respectable I was reinforcing the norms of respectability of Sri Lankan women, for women in factories, when they are wrongly vilified for not being respectable. Knowing that I was reproducing patriarchal norms of 'respectable' femininity I inevitably positioned myself in one side of this debate. I understand this contradiction as part of the politics of research, because in order to be accepted by management I had to

pretend to be respectable in a particular way and to emphasize it, but the disadvantage of doing so is that patriarchal assumptions become part of the research process and reproduce patriarchal norms.

Ethics

Within research, ethics refers to the moral principles guiding research from its inception through to the completion and publication of results (British Sociological Association, 2014). As a researcher in sociology adhering to the ethical guidelines of the British Sociological Association, to the best of my ability I tried to follow the ethical considerations within this research. Privacy and confidentiality of respondents' and the organisations' identities are protected by not including their real names in this writing. I use pseudonyms for each organisation and for all participants, and I do not indicate the exact locations of the factories I studied but only the broad area in which they are located. Although Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions have company websites I did not use the materials available on the sites to describe them. I omitted that because Sri Lanka being a very small island someone can at least make a guess about the companies' identity. Participants' names, designations, work organisations, etc. are not revealed for the same reason. Information collected through interviews/observations have not been disclosed to the work organisations of the respondents.

While ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents and the identity of their organisations, it was essential for me to enter into a relationship with the respondents. Accordingly, the relationship has to be ethical to ensure that what the researcher produces using the data collected from participants does not have any adverse impact on their lives. Thus I was conscious to be ethical at all times. For instance, some respondents in their interviews narrated highly personal information, such as love affairs or marriage breakdowns, and some even broke into tears. Some questioned me about whether the other interviewees also narrated their stories to that extent, and I was highly conscious not to share any such information. Some managers in a friendly manner asked me whether the respondents said negative things about them or the organisation. In such instances I said that I asked about things relevant to my research, not to managers. Knowing that I was studying three garment factories some lower level employees asked me whether it was possible for me to arrange a job

for them in other organisations. I explained very politely that I am not in a position to do such things. Some managers also asked me to share my experiences of other factories with them. At such times I did not share any information, explaining to them that it would be unethical.

I understand that at the level of writing a thesis the participants and the researcher have different priorities. Participants are interested in their concerns while the researcher is interested in the objectives of the research. Thus there can be a division to a certain extent between the story the participants want to tell and the findings and write-up of the researcher with a more theoretical orientation. This is because individual respondents are interested in their own life stories but the researcher attempts to relate the meanings of respondents' stories to larger, theoretically significant categories in social science (Josselson, 2007). To address the issue of different priorities, ethics of researchers should guide them to be conscious in writing that they demonstrate respect for the dignity of the participants and what they have to say.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology I adopted, seeking to make explicit the research process I developed to identify and understand the forms taken by inequalities at work in the garment industry in Sri Lanka. I have outlined the research questions at the beginning of the chapter and then discussed why I chose my case studies and how I analysed the data. I then discussed researching as a reflexive process, and finally paid attention to ethical considerations such as privacy and confidentiality of the participants and organisations. To understand the setting of the three case study organisations in which I will conduct my study the next chapter will look at the key characteristics of each organisation.

Chapter 4

An Overview of the Three Case Study Factories

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the key characteristics of my three case study factories: Muhammad's Clothing, Amma's Fashions and Rama's Shirts. In the chapter on methodology I explained why I chose these three factories, including especially their different ownership, size and place in the commodity chain. Here I will attempt to provide a more textured picture of their physical premises. I then look at aspects regarding the organisation of these factories which are readily summarised or enumerated for ease of reading, comparingthem in terms of management structure, management and workers' earnings, and gendered divisions of labour. These aspects indicate the degree of gender inequality, at the three factories, and the ways in which status differences are marked out. Finally, I look at the daily and annual routines of the three factories, paying particular attention to the ceremonial occasions during which the company and its personnel act out the status differentials between management and workers.

Presenting all this material in a single chapter seeks to avoid too much repetition when it comes to my identification of the distinctive inequality regime characteristics of each factory in the three following chapters. Here I concentrate on the similarities and differences that can be supported by visual observation, and information concerning management roles and shop floor divisions of labour that I was able to obtain from the senior managers. This information provides a picture of the context for the following chapters on the organisational processes and practices within each firm. My analyses of practices in the following chapters are in turn based primarily on the transcripts of my recorded interviews, and my fieldnotes on my casual conversations in the three workplaces. This chapter inevitably starts to raise questions about the different patterning of inequality we see in the factories.

Locality

I will begin with the locations of the three organisations, which are indicated on the map of Sri Lanka, below, by triangular symbols. The map shows the location of the towns which the three factories are positioned in. This does not make it possible to

identify the factories, as the areas in which they are located are quite large and there are many garment factories in each of these towns.

As can be seen, the factories are located in the Western and South Western part of Sri Lanka, and the reason for this is based on access.Garment factories are mainly found in this area, including Free Trade Zones near Colombo in the western province. The northern areas of Sri Lanka are largely agricultural, and were deeply affected by the civil war, which did not end till 2009.

Muhammad's Clothing is located in a highly urbanised environment in Sri Lanka's commercial capital, Colombo. Its headquarters and one of its 13 Sri Lankan factories are situated in the same premises. Amma's Fashions' head office, where I interviewed the owner and some senior managers, is located in Wattha, about 20 miles away from Colombo. The factory I studied is located in a remote area called Kurunegala, which is about 75 miles from Colombo. This factory is one of 5 owned by Amma's Fashions, which also has a factory on the same premises as the headquarters. The smallest factory I studied, Rama's Shirts, is located in Sri Jayewardenepura, Kotte[17], and a suburban area near Colombo.

[17] Sri Jayewardenepura, Kotte is the administrative capital of Sri Lanka.

Figure 4.1 Map of Sri Lanka

The immediate vicinity of each of the factories influences their size, physical environment, and access to labour, and shapes the extent to which they can provide good working conditions. The surroundings of Muhammad's Clothing and Rama's Shirts are highly congested, with a high population density. It is in a busy, noisy and dusty neighbourhood where there are many other commercial establishments, such as warehouses and other garment factories. The area is known for drug dealing and gang fights, and the company says that when hiring men from the surrounding areas it takes

care to identify and exclude alcohol/drug addicts. Managers' say that they have found men working in the factory under the influence of liquor.

The surroundings of Rama's Shirts are similarly plagued by traffic and dust. The office areas and factory are located on the top floor of a three-storied building. The ground floor of the building contains a supermarket, a bottled gas seller and a picture-framing store. On the first floor there is a gymnasium and a ladies hair salon. The area is highly commercialised and only recently developed, so there are no temples or churches located in the vicinity. With recent development of the infrastructure its population is increasing rapidly. Although both Muhammed's and Rama's enjoy good bus connections, going to the factory is not a pleasant experience due to heavy traffic along roads in the morning and evening.

In contrast, the head office of Amma's Fashions, where I interviewed senior managers, is located in a middle-class residential area of a suburb of Colombo, built by Ms R (Chairwoman) next to her home. Although one of the company's factories is next door, I chose to interview a remote factory, which is also in a much greener and more pleasant environment than Muhammed's or Rama's. Close to a small town with a few grocery shops and eating houses, there are large trees by the side of the road and a few paddy fields in the vicinity. The area is not noisy or dusty, although due to bright sunshine it is very hot.

The three factories are also located in areas characterised by a different religious and ethnic groups. Amma's, which is owned by a Sinhala Buddhist woman, is in a mainly Sinhala area, and it contributes some profits to the development of a Buddhist temple close to the factory. Both Muhammad's and Rama's are located in multi-ethnic areas. There are no religious buildings near Rama's, which is owned by a Hindu man, but Muhammed's pays its respects to local religious institutions as it donates money to both the nearby mosque and the local Buddhist temple. The HR manager said that the Buddhist monk who is the head of the nearby temple is very supportive, and allows company vehicles to be parked in the temple premises. Muhammed's also benefits from the monks' friendship because it shows any observers that although the owners are Muslims, they respect Buddhism. The additional advantage is that they would also enjoy some protection from the nearby temple in the case of riots. This is important because of the claims some extremist Buddhist monks have made that Muslims are

anti- Buddhist, and the country of Sinhala-Buddhists needs protection against them (Widger, 2015).

Buildings and Physical Facilities

The buildings and physical facilities of each factory constrain the conditions under which the employees work, but they are all characterised by considerable differences in what is provided for managers and workers at different levels.

Muhammad's Clothing is the largest company I studied, with 10,000 employees – and around 300 working in the factory I studied. It has limited space, with the floor area of the factory, head office and the main storerooms totalling1372 metres squared, spread across four floors. Most of the functional departments of the head office, as well as the top managers' offices, are close together on the ground floor. The machinists' assembly lines are on the first floor. Other production departments, such as cutting and ironing, are on the second floor. The third floor houses the storerooms for fabrics, buttons, labels, etc. The premises are very hot throughout, although the lack of any windows or other ventilation is a particular problem on the machinists' floor. There is inadequate fire protection or other safety measures. Only the offices of the top managers are air-conditioned. Employees have to use the stairs, since the elevator is used only to carry goods. The workers in the storeroom lack access to nearby toilets or even a water tap on their floor.

Like Muhammed's Clothing, Rama's Shirts has adapted an existing building for its factory premises. A much smaller company, with 40 employees altogether, the shop floor is located on the upper floor of an old building, and all the administrative functions are located in a room next to it. The total area of the factory is about 30 by 30 ft. Ventilation is poor and there are no safety measures such as fire extinguishers. There is no elevator, only a wide stairway, and dust and cobwebs hang on the dirty side walls. Tools and other materials are scattered about in a disorderly way.

Both the factory and the head offices of Amma's Fashions could not be more different from the other two companies. The brightly painted, two-story, purpose-built factory I studied employs about 600 people, and occupies about half of an acre/4840 square yards at the edge of a small town. Its outer appearance gives the impression of a successful company. For instance, there is a spacious well-maintained lawn and huge

trees in front of the building. The lawn is used as the fire assembly point. Inside the machinery is up to date, and there is good lighting and ventilation and safety measures, including fire protection. The architecture of headquarters, built in another town, is similar to an ordinary house and occupies about half an acre of land (2420 square yards) adjacent to the owner's own home; suggesting that it is under her personal and constant observation and control. The company employs about 6,000 people all together.

Organisational Hierarchies and Gender Division of Labour

A clear gender division of labour, both vertical and horizontal, is found in all three factories. I will look at these vertical and horizontal divisions at each company in turn.

At Muhammed's all the top managers are men, with six men from the owner's family in the positions of Chairman, Managing Director and the four Directors, who are Group Managers.Below these top managers are 5 senior managers, one of whom is a woman. In addition, there are about 7 women and 8 men executives (in the functional departments) and below them are the assistants and about 20 women and 10 men. As in all three organisations, women form the vast majority of machinists, and are usually supervised by other women. Four women work as cleaners, six men as labourers, and two women are employed as hostel matrons for women (located a quarter mile and two miles from the factory). Muhammed's also employs women to supervise ironing, fabric dyeing and other specialist sections, although it employs men to do the actual work. Managers say that men are employed for these 'heavy' jobs but women are needed as supervisors to ensure the quality of work, as they pay attention to detail more than men. Supervision of men by women in these cases did not generate particular tension, although the women supervisors come from a similar class background as the men. Perhaps the rationale, that the women would ensure quality, was accepted by the men.

We can look at the gender division of labour in Muhammad's Clothing factory operations in more detail. At management level, the factory manager, production manager and the quality control manager are all men. The factory HR department is run by the HR manager and the Group HR manager, both men. Shop floor workers are frequently called in to be bawled out for absences or falling production, and usually leave in tears or cursing. The HR department also employs 6 women: the HR

executive, trainee HR assistant, counsellor, Ladder[18] teacher, training line instructress and assistant training line instructress.

In production at Muhammed's women are concentrated on repetitive tasks and men mainly on those tasks seen as requiring strength. There are around 185 women and 15 men machine operators, 10 women and 4 men checkers, 40 women and 20 men helpers; 6 women and 9 men supervisors. The cutting machines are operated by 6 men although 4 women lay out the cloth. The ironing and pressing section has 12 men working in a very warm environment, with a woman supervisor. The 'button attach' section employs 2 women and 8 men as machinists, again with a woman supervisor. There is also a woman supervisor in the washing and dyeing section, with 3 men operating the machines.

The work study department[19] is responsible for recording production but also interacts with the machinists' supervisors to establish, record and monitor targets. The manager and the three work study officers are men, but four women work as recorders to mark hourly production on the whiteboards hanging in front of each production line. The employees of lines that achieve their daily target are entitled to an incentive.

The store's manager is a man, five women work as store assistants and five labourers are men. Each woman has a desk and performs repetitive jobs such as counting labels and buttons, and entering data into the computers.

Packing is done by five men labourers, who pack cardboard boxes and load them into containers for shipment, again under the supervision of a woman, from the similar background of men. The logistics department has a man as the manager and four men working as executives and two women as assistants.

Amma's Fashions differs from the two other firms, in so far as the two top positions are held by women – the owner/chairwoman and her daughter. I discuss later in the thesis the way in which these women exercise their authority. They work in the head office, along with 12 men serving as the executive director (the owner's son-in-law),

[18] Ladder is a training programme for women on the factory floor. I will discuss the programme in the chapter on Muhammad's Clothing Company.

[19] Work study is the systematic and analytical study of work process and work method with the objective of increasing efficiency, reducing cost and ensuring the best possible use of labour, machines, material resources and time available.

general managers and managers. The production floor of Amma's Fashions I studied employs 480 machinists (430 women and 50 men) with six managers. Three production executives at the factory are men, while five women and six men work as line supervisors. Sixty-five women and 20 men work as helpers to move garments along the line, remove stray threads, etc. Eighty quality checkers, including a fairly equal number of women and men, are placed in front of the sewing lines. Two women work with 38 men as ironers, with a woman as the supervisor. The cutting section employs 15 men as cutters and 4 women helpers. There is no dyeing department as cloth comes pre-dyed. A man runs the spacious stores, with seven men working under him as labourers. The packing department is close to the dispatch point, where 13 women and 8 men have a woman supervisor. Nine women and 2 men work as cleaners. The HR department has 7 women and 3 men: 2 women as the executive and counsellor along with 4 women and a young man as HR assistants, a training line instructress (a woman), a recruitment officer (a man) and a cleaning supervisor (a man). Women in the office do secretarial and administrative work and the positions held are executive, assistant or trainee. So the division of labour is similar to Muhammad's Clothing, including the presence of women as supervisors and in HR. The factory employees at Amma's Fashions enjoy good working conditions but hierarchical differences are similar.

The organisational hierarchy at Rama's Shirts is much simpler, since besides the owner there is only one (male) manager, who oversees one supervisor (a woman), and manages all the other operations. There are 24 women machinists and one man. Two steam irons are affixed at the side of the lines and two women iron the collars, pockets, etc. Three women do the quality checking. The cutter is a man, cutting about 50 layers at a time using an electric machine, and he also draws patterns manually and copies them onto the cloth. This is in contrast to other two factories, where patterns are drawn using computers by marker makers. A young woman and a young man help the cutter to lay the cloth and to number the cut pieces. Three men work as ironers. These ironers also carry the garbage downstairs, and lift the cloth rolls and boxes of finished garments. The mechanic does repairs to the machines, computers, etc. Apart from that he also runs errands for the owner or manager, for instance going to the bank to deposit the cheques or to withdraw money. This indicates that the management respects and trusts the mechanic but he is overloaded. Two women work as packers and from time

to time the storekeeper, a woman, helps them pack. In contrast to Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions, lower-level women and men are assigned duties and responsibilities beyond their job roles: women machinists, helpers, checkers, etc., prepare tea and serve the top personnel and also sweep the floor and clean the bathrooms; men ironers carry goods and garbage and perform rituals; the supervisor helps to pack and quality check, and the manager helps the ironers to lift heavy cartons.

The gender division of labour is justified by managers and workers in all three factories in similar ways. 'Sex-typing', meaning the categorisation of jobs as 'male' or 'female' (Elias, 2004), takes place in all of the factories, despite some differences in the division of labour (for instance the presence of women packers at Rama's). Managers in all the organisations say that the jobs men do are 'difficult tasks' (in Sinhala 'amaru weda') and 'heavy tasks' (in Sinhala 'bara weda') that require a lot of 'physical strength' (in Sinhala 'shakthiya oone'). As women have less physical strength (in Sinhala 'Shakthiya madi') than men they have to be employed in less heavy jobs. Men use the notion of 'physical strength' to pay more to men in skilled jobs, such as cutters, than to women machinists who are equally skilled. Mr S, the mechanic at Rama's Shirts, says that

> Women are mostly in the garment factories for sewing but it is very rare to see women as cutters, mechanics and so on. I think these jobs need more strength and even women prefer to be machinists as they are familiar with it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Women are often employed in supervisory roles, however, a general manager at Amma's Fashions, Mr Hem, says that it is not being a woman or a man that matters but the capability of the individual to do a certain job:

> There is a woman production executive, a married one, she was a quality controller and then got promoted. When compared to her, some men are not at her level of performance. So it mostly depends on the person and his or her capacity rather than being a man or a woman (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

There is a certain social stigma attached to men who work in a job such as machinist, which is usually seen as 'women's work'. Mr Ru, a machinist at Muhammed's Clothing, says that

> Although I am machinist I cannot do it after marriage. Say when I get a child, can that child say that I am a machinist. So I am planning to get a job such as heavy vehicle driving (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Managers also believe that women do administrative and secretarial work in a more methodical manner than men. Mr M, the General Manager of Merchandising at Amma's Fashions said,

> What I have seen is females are more methodical and they keep things in order and so on (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

But they choose not to employ women as merchandisers and managers because the industry seeks a lot of commitment from employees in these jobs, and say that women cannot fulfil these requirements due to their family responsibilities. Mr Az, Managing Director of Muhammad's Clothing and nephew of the owner, says that

> The garment business is a very difficult business, it is not like any other thing that you set up and go ahead [let it run itself]. It is changing and challenging, so for a female until they get married they can run around, there is no time for you to work [i.e. to do everything]. So what happens is they come to a certain point that they have to settle down in life, get married, have children, then they cannot fulfil these responsibilities. It is too difficult for them, so people who are married settle down. [Once] children are grown up they can come and work here. This business demands a lot of you but it is a very well paid industry, they are paid for it, they are compensated, but it is very demanding and 100% commitment has to be there (Muslim/Married).

It is also important to note that retention of operational level women employees has become a difficult task for managers (Rathnasooriya and Jayatilake, 2016). The managers say that the women machinists are recruited at a very young age, and it is assumed that they will leave upon marriage. This assumption is even built into the national social security arrangements, which I discussed in the chapter on country context. This means that age, as well as gender, distinguishes managers and many male workers from the women machinists.

Salary Scales

As in most organisations (Acker, 2006), differences in salaries and other monetary benefits follow the hierarchical levels of the three companies. But workers in the garment industry earn less than other sectors in Sri Lanka. According to the Sri Lankan National Minimum Wage of Workers Act No. 3 (Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 2016) the minimum monthly wage of any employee is Rs 10,000. Prasanna and Kuruppuge (2013) found that in 2012 average workers in the industry earned Rs 16,132 (FTZs, Rs 17,145 and outside FTZs, Rs 15,118) as a take-home salary. This, like minimum wage levels, is hardly enough to live on. Wages

are the ‘Achilles heel’ of the Sri Lankan garment industry because workers are not paid a living wage. The state is arguably responsible for the failure to adequately protect workers’ welfare (Goger and Ruwanpura, 2016).

Table 4.1 Comparison of Salaries of the Three Companies with Public and Private Sector Organisations

Designation	Monthly Salary in Rupees * £1 = Rs 200/$1= Rs 150			Other Pvt. Sector Org's**	Public Sector Org's ***
	RS	MC	AF		
Trainee machine operators/Helpers/ Labourers	10,000 – 12,000	10,000 – 12,000	12,000– 15,000	10,000	24,000
Packers	12,000 – 15,000	10,000 - 12000	15,000– 18,000	Not Known	Not Known
'A' grade machine operators/ Office Assistants	15,000 – 18,000	15,500 – 25,000	25,000 – 30,000	15,000	27,000
Mechanic	22,000	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known
Supervisor	25,000	30,000 – 35,000	35,000 – 40,000	60,000	45,000
Cutters	31,000	Not Known	35,000 – 40,000	Not Known	Not Known
Manager	50,000	70,000- 100,000	100,000 - 200,000	75,000	88,000
Senior managers	Not Applicable	100,000– 150,000	Not Applicable	125,000	100,000
Group Managers	Not Applicable	300,000 – 350,000	250,000 – 300,000	Not Known	Not Known
Directors	Not Applicable	Not Fixed/Shares	350,000 and profit	Not Known	Not Known
Owners	Not fixed/Profit	Not Fixed/Profit	Not Fixed/Profit	Not Known	Not Known

Source: Interview Data RS – Rama's Shirts MC – Muhammad's Clothing AF – Amma's Fashions

* Monthly Salary excluding incentives and overtime payments

** Salary Explorer, 2016 *** Revision of the Salaries in Public Service, 2016

Table 4.1, above, shows the salaries of employees of the three case-study companies and compares them with the recorded salaries of public and private sector employees. Women comprise the majority of workers at the lower level in garment factories, and are paid the least. The lowest salary at all three organisations is less than the lowest salary in the public sector, less than half, but below supervisory level is similar to or higher than other private sector companies. However, Amma's Fashions pays its lower level employees better than the other two firms. The lowest salary at Muhammad's Clothing and Rama's Shirts is the National Minimum Wage of Rs 10,000 per month, while at Amma's Fashion's it is Rs 12,000 or Rs 2000 more. In fact all the employees are paid more at Amma's Fashions. For example, 'A' grade machine operators earn nearly Rs 10,000 a month more at Amma's than at the other two companies; more than the other private sector companies and almost equal to the public sector organisations. Even supervisors at Amma's Fashions earn nearly Rs 10,000 more than at the other two companies, although less than at private sector companies generally or in the public sector. Amma's Fashions is in a rural area and the cost of living is lower than urban areas, but still salaries are higher than at Muhammad's Clothing and Rama's Shirts. Amma's is located in a rural area, where costs of living are less, so the higher salaries might be because their workers are more skilled, or because they are competing with many other garment factories nearby.

Table 4.1 also shows that managers at Amma's Fashions earn between Rs 50,000 and 30,000 per month more than the manager at Rama's Shirts, and managers at Muhammad's Clothing earn Rs 25,000 and Rs 12,000 more than at the other private sector organisations and the public sector organisations. The exception is group managers, who are paid nearly Rs 50,000 less at Amma's Fashions than Muhammad's Clothing. This may be because salaries at Amma's are graduated, whereas at Muhammed's there is a huge jump up at group manager level.

The steepness of the earnings gradient is high, even omitting the unknown earnings of the owners. Those with the highest salaries at Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions earn 30 times and 29 times, respectively, more than the lowest paid. This differential is even steeper than the recorded gradient of the private sector in Sri Lanka more generally, where the highest paid earn 12 times as much as the lowest. The gradient at Rama's Shirts is much less, as one manager earns only about 5 times more

than the lowest paid, which is not dissimilar to the earnings gap in the public sector, where the highest paid earn only 4 times the lowest salaries. It is easy to understand from these figures, as I explained in the chapter on country context, why people seek to enter public sector jobs, even though there are few opportunities.

It would be interesting to speculate on how the garment sector firms can maintain such high salaries at their top levels. For instance, Muhammad's Clothing ensures that the top people get an equal or higher wage compared to other private sector companies, despite the garment industry being seen as a sector characterised by low earnings. Perhaps the lower levels are squeezed to retain high salaries for top personnel.

Although the table does not compare women's and men's salaries, it can be seen that the shop floor jobs that men do, such as cutter or mechanic, are paid much more than the machinists. Male machinists can also earn more than women machinists, at least at Muhammed's and Amma's (see Table 4.2), whether or not they have more experience. There is no difference between men and women supervisors' earnings. These figures are based on my interviews at Amma's and Muhammed's, but I did not interview any male machinists or supervisors at Rama's, and only one woman supervisor so I do not have data from that company.

Table 4.2 A Comparison of the Salaries of Machine Operators and Supervisors

Machine Operator (Muhammad's Clothing)	Salary (In Rupees)	Machine Operator (Amma's Fashions)	Salary (In Rupees)	Supervisor (Amma's Fashions)	Salary (In Rupees)
Ms D (Experience 1.5 years)	20,000	Ms Nan (Experience 13 years)	24,000	Ms Shri	40,000
Mr Ru Experience 8 years)	21,000	Mr Chathu (Experience 8 years)	25,000	Mr Nuw	40,000

In addition to employees' regular salaries, all the organisations provide various payments for employees such as incentives, overtime[20] and bonuses, which are not

[20]All three companies pay at the rate of one and half times the hourly pay of each employee, according to Regulation 3, 6 & 7 of the Shop and Office Employees Act of 1954.

included in the figures in Table 4.1. Performance-based incentives either for individuals or groups are intended to inspire employees to achieve targets. Muhammad's Clothing's factory floor employees receive an incentive of Rs 150 per day if their line achieves its target. Amma's Fashions pays both an incentive to a line as well as to individuals. Two hours daily overtime is compulsory at both companies, but Rama's Shirts requires overtime only when the company needs it. Other bonuses include long service bonuses. This is a month's salary every December for attaining over a year's service at Muhammad's Clothing. Rama's Shirts pays a bonus in April, the amount being at the discretion of the owner and manager. At Amma's Fashions a bonus equal to an employee's monthly salary is paid in April and December for those with more than six months' experience, and those who are not entitled to the bonus are given a gift pack.

The above analysis shows that differences in salaries exist between the factories. Rama's Shirts has the lowest salaries. This may be due to the company's small scale, and serving only the local market with a standard product (gents' shirts). The other two companies are part of the global supply chain, but Amma's Fashions has higher salaries across the hierarchy than at Muhammad's Clothing. This may be because it is necessary for Amma's Fashions to retain skilled machinists due to the complicated patterns of the products and use of fine fabrics. Further, being a rural area with many garment factories Amma's competes with other factories for skilled labour. Rama's Shirts pays no incentive extras, probably because meeting the deadlines of local buyers is easier than meeting those of foreign buyers, so there is less pressure to meet their daily targets.

Status Demarcations

In addition to differences in salaries, people located at different points in each factory's hierarchy are accorded different degrees of respect based on notions of their status, both as regards their place in the hierarchy and their status in the wider society. This can be seen in terms of how they are addressed or referred to, and is also embedded in the physical arrangements of the workplace. In both cases, inequalities are normalised through these arrangements.

Forms of Address

In garment factories forms of address are a crucial marker of status, marking out social class as well as gender differences. In all three companies most managers are men from the elite or middle social class, and are called 'sir' by both workers and lower level managerial staff. For instance, Ms T, a HR Executive at Muhammad's Clothing, says

> The one who directly supervises me is Sir Y. I had this problem at the beginning… it was a puzzle for me, who directly supervises me? There are instances that I report to Sir A as well(Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried)

At Amma's Fashions the chairwoman is addressed as 'Madam', the MD and women executives as 'Miss', and at Rama's Shirts the woman supervisor also as 'Miss'. Ms Ro, secretary to the Chairwoman at Amma's Fashions (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married), says: 'I report to madam I mean to Ms R as I am the secretary to the chairwoman.' The only women manager at Muhammad's Clothing is called 'Miss'.

In contrast, in all three factories, shop floor level employees, including male machinists, are referred to as 'children', which is true throughout the garment industry (Jayewardene, 2009). This may also be what they call themselves. In Sinhala the word is 'lamai' (children). I observed that it was first used in the handloom industry by trainers in villagers teaching very young women how to sew, but has now become established throughout the industry, and is used instead of 'workers' or 'employees'. According to Jayewardene (2009) this form of address suggests that women garment workers are not real workers like other workers. It is a sign of disrespect, although workers may not always see it that way. I suggest that calling women 'children' also desexualizes them, because a child would not be an object of sexual harassment. Thus women should not be sexual targets as they are not women but children. I quote Ms D, the supervisor at Rama's Shirts for an example of how the term is used to refer to workers.

> Children (lamai) are having a lot of relief in this factory. Even Sir R is supportive and I also help the children in their issues (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Women workers may also be addressed as 'child' when spoken to.

Intermediate level staff in all three organisations use their first name when speaking to each other. However, some women, both in the factory and in the head offices of

all three organisations, address elderly women workers as ‘akka’ (elder sister), men as ‘ayya’ (elder brother), younger women as ‘nangi’ (younger sister) and men as ‘malli’ (younger brother). I suggest that women in general try to develop intimate relations by using kinship words for their colleagues. For instance, Ms D. a machinist at Muhammad’s Clothing (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married), says ‘My supervisor, Sihsa Akka (Elder sister), is very helpful so I like to work under her’. Mr San, an ironer at Rama’s Shirts (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried) also says: ‘There are three ironers in the factory, myself, Jaya Ayya (Elder brother) and another boy.’ However I observed that men in all three organisations were less likely to use kinship terms.

Status Demarcations Embedded in Physical Arrangements

Status distinctions are also embedded in the physical design and arrangements in all three companies. All the factories provide different facilities to employees at different levels of the hierarchy. but the range of provision is more extreme at some than others.

At Muhammed’s the main reception is air-conditioned, with glossy floor tiles and comfortable sofas. It is staffed by the receptionist and the telephone operator, two young Muslim women, wearing the hijab, which may indicate the religion of the owners to some visitors. From then on, the building and available facilities mark out status differences in every possible way – for instance, access to the factory, space, comforts of furniture, air-conditioning, canteens, methods of serving food, type of toilets and so on. The comfortable, modern entrance at reception is exclusively for the use of top management and visitors, while office staff and factory workers enter through separate doorways on the side of the building. Top personnel have spacious offices, sophisticated furniture and air-conditioning. Office staff and managers have less luxurious, but modern furniture and air-conditioning. In contrast, women employees in the sewing machinists’ room, who account for more than 70% of employees, sit on unpadded wooden benches in an airless and congested environment. Canteen facilities also differ. The staff canteen has a separate table for the top management, whose meals are served at the table, while all other staff serve themselves, cafeteria-style. Serving meals to the tables of top management (all family members) parallels the employment of domestic servants who would serve meals to them at home. The canteen for factory workers has long wooden tables and benches, and the employees must line up to get their food.

The stress of working in Muhammad's Clothing is evident in the high proportion of employees who use the sick room, which is visited by about 60 employees every day (30% of shop floor employees), and some are taken to the nearby hospital. This small room (about 12ft. x 10ft.) has three small, curtained-off beds, two for women and one for men. Situated by the side of the staff canteen, it is very noisy, hot and congested, with no windows and only one ceiling fan. There is a qualified nurse hired from a private nursing service. She is advised by the company doctor, who visits the company once a month to give out medicine.

Differences between toilet facilities between the ranks imply different bodily habits and needs. Muhammed's head office complex on the ground floor has two bathrooms: one for women and one for men (with sit-down commodes, washbasins, toilet tissue paper and soap), which are kept clean. In contrast the 10 toilets each for women and men factory workers have squatting pans and water taps and are not very clean. Managers and office staff are provided with clean sit-down commodes, so factory staff squatting in dirty toilets is an indication of the attitudes of management towards their factory workers.

At Amma's Fashions provision for all the employees is better, although there are still differences between levels. At Amma's head office all the managers and office staff enjoy modern furniture and air-conditioning. The chairwoman's office is bigger than the rooms for the two directors, her daughter and son-in-law, and it has an attached bathroom with a commode, basin, toilet tissues, etc. The General Managers' rooms are smaller than the directors'. Ordinary managers have glass cubicles with modern furniture. Each department has a big space, shared by executives, assistants and trainees, who are mostly women. There are two toilets, off the main corridor, for women and men with commodes and washbasins, and these are kept clean.

Compared to Muhammad's Clothing, reception on the first floor of the head office at Amma's is very small, and the young woman receptionist mostly wears jeans and a top. The company is not as strict as Muhammad's Clothing, where women are expected to wear a saree for all ceremonies and training. Most companies owned by Sinhalese expect receptionists to wear a saree, so it could be that senior management at Amma's is willing to recognise the extra time it takes women to change into a saree in the morning after completing the household chores. However, the chairwoman

herself nearly always wears a saree. In reception there is a life-sized photograph of the chairwoman in a saree (indicating a typical 'respectable' woman), so visitors learn that the company is owned by a Sinhala woman. Underneath the photograph the following verse is written in Sinhala, 'You are the mother who gave birth to the child Amma's Fashions: We respect you'[21]. This suggests that the image of the company is deeply connected to the motherhood, femininity and the respectability of Ms R.

The reception at Amma's Fashion's factory in the remote area is stylish, but there is no receptionist or telephone equipment. This is because the factory is in a remote area and people do not show up unannounced. As at Muhammad's Clothing, machinists sit on wooden benches, but with good light, ventilation and space, whereas the factory managers have air-conditioned offices with modern furniture. At the factory the canteen facilities are shared by managers, supervisors and workers, and everyone self-serves. The sick room is spacious and ventilated. There are two-curtained beds for woman and one for men (covered), but in contrast to Muhammad's Clothing only about 10 to 15 employees come daily. The sick room has its own, clean toilet with a commode and a washbasin. The nurse gives medicine only for minor sicknesses and others are taken to the nearby hospital. The toilets for shop floor employees are clean with washbasins and mirrors, but have squatting pans. The factory on the ground floor has enough space and ventilation. There is an open space in the middle of the factory with trees and a pond with ornamental fish. However even with differences, the company provides good working conditions to all the employees, ensuring safety and health, compared to Muhammad's Clothing and Rama's Shirts.

The owner of Rama's Shirts has a big, air-conditioned room with modern furniture. His room also contains framed pictures of different Hindu gods and goddesses that indicate his religious affiliation. The factory manager's room is smaller with some furniture, and only a standing fan. The sewing machines form three lines down the middle of a hall, and the machinists sit on wooden benches. There is enough lighting as bulbs are on all day long but ventilation is poor, and even with six ceiling fans the place is warm. There is no sickroom or even a properly secluded place for a sick employee to rest. The storeroom contains corroded racks and cupboards, and

[21]TW (Real name of the company company) daruwa (child) bihikala (gave birth) mawuni (mother), obata (to you) apage (our) gaurawaya (respect).

storeroom staff complain because there are no windows and only one ceiling fan. There is a tea/lunch room with wooden tables and benches, which is very crowded at meal times, but unlike the other two factories no meals are provided. There is only one small toilet with a sit-down commode for all 40 employees, which is hardly ever cleaned. The facilities are basically what the company found there when they rented the premises, and no improvements have been made.

Daily and Annual Routines and Rituals

Status distinctions embedded in both terms of address and the physical organisation of the factories carry through to the many rituals and ceremonies that mark the working day and the calendar year. Although there is a relative lack of research on rituals in organization studies, the available literature suggests that rituals encourage organisation members to forego their social differences and confirm shared social membership (Islam, 2009).Within rituals there are well defined, rehearsed roles for actors to play and rituals can be seen as planned social dramas (Smith and Stewart, 2011). But little is known of how organisational members interpret rituals and the impact of rituals on organisational functioning (Smith and Stewart, 2011).

Different rituals are practiced in the three organisations, depending partly on their size; reciting precepts, reading pledges and singing the national anthem or company anthem are taken for granted aspects of Sri Lankan life. In fact I did not even think to ask the respondents why they have these rituals as I have been doing most of them since my schooldays, and now at my own workplace. However, looking at it analytically I might argue that most of these rituals are conducted in big companies to encourage the employees in factories across the country to identify with the company and the company's interests. The whole company does something together, at the same time, implying that they have an identity and interests in common. Rama's Shirts, the smallest company I studied, has fewer collective rituals and it may be that, because it is the only factory of the company, it has no need to develop a shared identity. Supporting this type of argument, Deal and Kennedy (2000) and Islam (2009) suggest that rituals attempt to establish an emotional unity or community bond, and develop a common identity and assign meaning to mundane activities. Further, rituals connect people in a deeper sense than rationally-based meetings (Deal and Kennedy, 2000).

In all organisations participation in routines may convey employees' place in the hierarchy (Acker, 2006). In the three organisations I studied, top level personnel do not always participate in routines or rituals, but lower level employees have strict schedules. For instance at Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions I was told that those at group manager and positions above do not have a specific time to report to work. This is because, depending on the circumstances, they sometimes work till midnight, and they travel to factories in other parts of the country sometimes even on Sundays. The Chairwoman of Amma's Fashions comes to her office only when she has scheduled a meeting, and the owner of Rama's Shirts comes to the factory only for a few hours two days a week. However, other employees of all three organisations have to arrive exactly on time. Being late leads to deductions from their daily pay.

Employees also have to follow specified behaviour in daily rituals. These begin with*removing one's shoes*before entering the shop floor – there are shoe racks at the entrance. This is similar to the practice of removing shoes before entering temples or mosques, so is a sign of respect as well as a practical measure to keep the shop floor clean. According to a women supervisor (Ms R) at Muhammad's Clothing the chairman treats the factory as a holy place and he gets angry when people wear shoes while at work. In contrast at the other two factories it is said to be done to ensure that the floor is clean. At Muhammad's Clothing and at Amma's Fashions employees in the head office wear shoes while working, so wearing shoes also signifies status.

Daily Religious Observances

Religious observances are another daily ritual. At Amma's Fashions and Rama's Shirts the five precepts of Buddhism are recited in the morning before work begins, but not at Muhammad's Clothing. This is because the owners of Muhammad's Clothing are Muslims. Amma's Fashions is owned by a Buddhist family, and Rama's Shirts is owned by a Hindu man but almost all the employees are Buddhists and Hindus respect the Lord Buddha as one of their gods. One of the male workers at Rama's also lights incense under the pictures of Hindu gods. Reciting the five precepts makes a promise to oneself, and they are recited daily by Buddhist children in school (for the wording see Appendix 7).

It is explicit that Amma's Fashions adheres to Sinhala Buddhist rituals and traditions. Ms R is a strong believer in Buddhist philosophy and wishes employees to follow her

example, as a way of making a success of their lives. She told me that she went through many difficulties in life as a widow with two young daughters trying to establish a business. According to her, believing in and practicing Buddhist principles gave her the strength to succeed. She believes that anyone can do it if they believe in Buddhist philosophy.[22] At 8 a.m. a recording of the five precepts in women's voices is played; everyone stands, places their palms together and raises their hands to chest level to recite the five precepts, bowing their heads at the end. It is women who do these rituals at home and in temples and the same gender role is played by women at Amma's Fashions. This is the expected form of behaviour when reciting precepts and is taught in schools. Non-Buddhist employees stand without speaking the words. There are loudspeakers fixed in different locations for everyone to hear. In the factory there is also a shrine room with a Buddha statue and every morning women take it in turns to offer flowers, light oil lamps and incense sticks.

The precepts are also recited at Rama's Shirts, but a ceremony indicating respect for the Hindu gods and goddesses is done first, because the owner is a Hindu man. Mr J (ironer) arrives around 7 a.m. and cleans the place where statues of the gods are kept. He lights the lamps, incense sticks and offers flowers first to the Hindu gods, and then to the Buddha statue placed in the middle of the factory. A man may have been chosen to do this to ensure that a menstruating woman does not, since women are not supposed to enter Hindu temples during menstruation. But, as in the home, women take turns to bring and offer flowers. One of the women rings the bell at 7.30 a.m. and employees recite loudly the five precepts while standing, keeping their palms together and raising their hands to chest level. After that, for about one hour Buddhist sermons called *pariththa* are played on a recorder while the employees work. While chatting with employees, I came to know that women think that reciting precepts before work begins and listening to *pariththa* ensures the day is blessed and enables them to concentrate better.

[22] She also mentioned some words of the Lord Buddha to prove her argument,'Dhammo hawe rakkathi dhamma chari' and the meaning is 'Those who are in dhamma are protected by the dhamma'.http://thripitaka.org/view/bjts/sp34/35
http://thripitaka.org/view/bjts/sp22sp23/133

Anthem Singing

Singing the company anthem is another daily routine at Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions (in contrast Rama's Shirts does not have an anthem, and as we shall see later in the thesis work relations are more informal). Although it is a taken for granted ritual in Sri Lanka and I did not inquire about it, it could be that the two companies with many factories might want to promote the same cultural values in all the factories and to develop a feeling of attachment to the company, as well to each other as co-workers. Singing together at the same time might also be a way of mitigating the huge inequalities within the workforce, at least for a few minutes. Supporting my argument, Elegnius (2005) points out that an anthem is an expression of citizenship that inspires feelings of gratitude, hope and belongingness. Anthems are also a tool that can create bonds and reinforce goals among individuals, and those who compose an anthem promote bonding with their choice of words (Cerulo, 1989).

Following the tradition of anthem singing in Sri Lanka, before work begins everyone at Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions stand for the company anthem. The recording is sung, in Sinhala, by women and men to instrumental music. Employees stand straight while singing, with their hands by their sides and most of the employees sing and bow their head at the end. This is the expected form of behaviour when singing an anthem, learned at school.

Figure 4.2 Company Anthems

Muhammad's Clothing	Amma's Fashions
The place is serene Even the name of MC is soothing Using thread we sew garments For the whole world It is the strength of Sri Lanka You are the strength of Sri Lanka We are the poor youth Thousands of lives are supported At MC we are in search of gold coins We complete different designs We complete new designs There are no differences in race religion or caste But all are like children, We cover the need for clothes in the world By sewing garments in the factory Goodwill spreads around, World get excited by the name of MC May you live long (Repeat three times)	This is our field of victory New life in the world of creations Blissful dream of the nation Honour of Sri Lanka Golden name of AF (Repeat two times) With strength and perseverance We commit for the name of our motherland Let's go along this silk route With determination let's go forward This factory floor is our blessed property Should protect as one's own life New country new world Let's build them it is our duty

The words of the two company anthems are shown in Figure 4.2. They share an emphasis on the unitary interests of all those who work in the company, and give the company an identity that goes beyond being a mere workplace. If one believed these constructions it would be very hard to challenge the company or to see it as exploitative. There are also some differences. At Muhammad's Clothing the song

expresses patriotism, seeing sewing clothes for the world as reflecting the glory of Sri Lanka: 'using thread we sew garments for the whole world, it is the strength of Sri Lanka'. Workers are expected to take pride in participating in the garment industry, as one of the leading export sectors in the country. The concerns of the owners as members of the Muslim ethnic minority may be incorporated through the emphasis on treating everyone equally: 'There are no differences in race, religion or caste, but all are like children'. This line also emphasises the status of workers as children, and elsewhere in the anthem as 'poor youth' who are dependent on the company for their income: 'We are the poor youth, thousands of lives are supported, at MC we are in search of gold coins, May you live long!' It is interesting that the anthem begins by saying that the company environment is peaceful and calm ('the place is serene, even the name of MC is soothing') because, as I document in this thesis, relations in the factory are particularly acrimonious.

The anthem of Amma's Fashions also incorporates patriotic sentiments but uses more intimate words, speaking about the motherland. It suggests that employees by committing to their jobs also fulfil their duty to the country: 'We commit for the name of our motherland'. This might be significant as a way of indirectly linking the woman owner of the company, a mother, with the country. It also highlights that the company brings honour to the country with their products: 'This is our field of victory, honour of Sri Lanka'. The anthem makes no direct reference to a particular religion but says that Amma's Fashions is a sacred place and employees should protect it. The anthem also connects their work to the glorious history of the silk route as a once profitable route, which thereby references its overseas market: 'Let's go along the silk route'.

Pledge

Muhammed's Clothing does not recite the five precepts but employees are requested to pledge. A pledge is similar to taking an oath or affirmation when assuming duties in the public sector, which is another taken for granted ritual in Sri Lanka. Following the national practice, Muhammad's Clothing uses the following pledge.

> Appreciating togetherness and cooperation, today I am determined to do my job according to the required standard, quality and efficiently.

Although there is no specific literature on the purposes of reciting a pledge I suggest that, as for the other rituals, a pledge might be a reminder to the employees about the

desired behaviour at work. However, I understand that the employees say it because it is expected but might not have an understanding of the anthem's purpose. I did not inquire from the participants why the pledge is read as it is taken for granted.

Compulsory Cleaning of Machines

Cleaning the machines is a practical necessity in a factory, but at Amma's Fashions it is incorporated into a daily, compulsory ritual. As a result when compared to the other two factories Amma's Fashions is very neat and tidy. The ritual also marks a difference between factory floor employees and office staff, since there are cleaners to deal with the office equipment, such as computers and telephones, but factory floor employees clean their own machines.

The cleaning process begins soon after the anthem and before work begins. A recording highlights the need to have a job to live a good life and to look after one's family. It also says that in doing a job it is important to clean and respect the equipment one uses. Then it asks everyone to clean their machine (for the wording see Appendix 8). Music similar to jazz plays in the background.

I also observed women at Amma's Fashions respecting the sewing machines by 'worshipping' after cleaning. I was told that women do it as the machine helps them earn a living and also they believe that because they respect their machines they can work without pricking a finger or making errors. 'Worshipping'[23] objects to gain blessings is a practice in Sri Lanka among all religions except for Islam. Although there is no compulsory cleaning process at Muhammad's Clothing or Rama's Shirts, most of the women clean and respect their machines in the same way. They believe that the object favours the user if the object is respected.

As discussed above, the daily routines of the three companies have certain similarities in seeming to use traditional religious or national symbols to promote compliance and commitment from the workforce. However these rituals might not be created with this intent, because they are taken for granted. The extent to which the particular outcomes of these rituals are achieved cannot be said, however, they go along with the other organisational practices I identify in this thesis.

[23] 'Worshipping' is the literal meaning of respecting an object by placing the palms together and bowing the head towards the object.

Also, although not a ritual it is a practice to play music in the three factories all day long. At Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions Sinhala, English, Tamil and Hindi songs are played through loudspeakers placed all over the factory.

Annual Ceremonies

Besides the daily rituals there are different annual ceremonies in all three factories, and I participated in one first at Muhammad's Clothing and then at Amma's Fashions (I could not participate in a ceremony at Rama's Shirts but while chatting with employees I got to know about the celebrations). All three factories mainly celebrate countrywide events, such as New Year on the 1st of January, the Sinhala and Hindu New Year, in April, and Christmas in December. I argue that these celebrations might not be undertaken with particular purposes in view, but might still reinforce dominant social and cultural values. For example in both the ceremonies I attended, employees were expected to show respect for top management as the embodiment of the company. Supporting this style of argument Smith and Stewart (2011) state that by reminding people of their shared values and purposes, periodic ceremonies are used by organisations to inspire a sense of communal spirit.

Muhammad's Clothing

Despite the owners being Muslim, the factory workers do not commonly celebrate Muslim holidays at work, since the workforce is predominately Sinhala Buddhist, and instead celebrate New Year on the 1st of January. There is also an annual trip for the employees.

I participated in the ceremony held on the 1st of January 2015. Throughout the ceremony I observed how the owners and other managers are shown respect. This is shown partly through adopting respectable and impressive dress, at least for women. Following the organisational norm most of the Sinhala women wore colourful sarees, and a few Muslim and Tamil women wore colourful salwars. The women in the HR department said that the norm is for women to wear an elegant new saree for the ceremony, and I also wore a colourful silk saree. However, I did not notice a difference for men, who wore their usual office attire for the ceremony. Respect is also shown by bowing to the owners/managers. At the beginning of the celebration, following the Sinhala, Buddhist and Tamil Hindu conventions of respecting ones elders by 'worshipping' them, most of the men and women employees knelt down, keeping their

hands together and bowing their heads to the owners/managers. Muslim, Sinhala Christian, and Tamil Christian men and women shook hand with the managers.

The ceremony of lighting an oil lamp and boiling milk[24] accorded the chairman great respect. Then he and two group managers gave speeches emphasising how well the company was doing in meeting its targets, and gave away gifts to those who performed well during the last year. Women then invited the men to have tea and served it to the members of the owner's family, who sat at a separate table, but did not eat or drink with the men. These eating arrangements mimic the domestic sphere where women serve men first and eat after them. The factory floor employees were not invited by anyone for tea but served themselves food (kept on another table), then sat on their low benches and ate. This was again an act of disrespect to the lower level employees and marks a difference between employees of different levels.

The role of women from the company office in organising the occasion is taxing, and one they resent. They told me that they had to spend many hours beyond normal working hours to undertake tasks, duties and responsibilities beyond their job role. Besides organising the ceremony, putting out the chairs and tables, decorating the hall, etc., was hard work. Some complained that even though it was the first day of the year they could not be with their own families for the first meal of the year. All these comments made me understand that women did not participate happily but pretended to in front of the managers. Furthermore, the company sponsors only the cost of milk rice for the ceremony, with employees having to pay the rest through contributing Rs 100 each into a collection. In appreciation of employees' contributions at the end each one was given a parcel containing 2 1/2 yards of imported cloth.

[24] In Sri Lanka boiling milk is considered a blessing.According to Sinhala tradition it is done on any important day of a person, organisation or country. The owners of Muhammed's Clothing, despite being Muslims, follow this tradition. On this occasion, a hearth had been prepared at the entrancewith firewood to light. A clay pot filled with coconut milk was placed above the hearth. Each woman who participated had to bring an item (e.g. firewood, milk, pot, etc.) and they rallied round the hearth to prepare it to be lit by the chairman. All the managers and the employees also gathered around in anticipation of the chairman's arrival. As soon as he arrived the HR executive gave him a lighted candle to ignite the wood. While all those around applauded, the chairman lit the fire. Sinhalese believe that if the milk boils well and spills over then the year ahead will be a good one. So everyone applauded again when the milk boiled over.

Amma's Fashions

Under the guidance of Ms R, Amma's Fashions celebrates Sinhala/Tamil New Year annually in all its factories. I participated in the New Year celebrations held at the head office and the adjoining factory in April 2015. I observed that Ms R wore a particularly elegant saree but her daughter wore jeans and a top. I suggest that Ms R wears a saree for such occasions because she is recognised by the employees as a role model and as a mother, one which she seeks to emphasise through her attire. As at Muhammad's Clothing, throughout the ceremony owners and managers are given prominence and treated with special respect. For example, the Amma's celebrations began with five young woman, dressed in sarees, offering a bunch of beetle leaf and kneeling down, keeping their hands together at chest level to 'worship' the chairwoman and the top level personnel. The Chairwoman then gave a speech, addressing the employees as 'daruwo' (a more intimate term than children). She then commented on the dress of women and said the best attire for young women is a frock that covers the body properly and she wished that they would wear it when coming to work (although her daughter was wearing jeans). I understand this as an attempt by Ms R to remind employees about the importance of respectability for women. However her daughter, who wears jeans, seems to be exempt, perhaps marking a difference among employees in relation to social class. Women coming from lower social classes might have to wear specified attire to be considered as respectable.

In contrast to the celebration at Muhammad's Clothing, for their tea the office employees sat at the same table as the managers and owners, but served the top personnel first. There followed a range of mostly traditional competitions. The MD and the executive director (wife and husband) too participated in one of the competitions, to show their willingness to join in. Although at Amma's women work hard to organise the event, men support them by putting up the infrastructure, such as the tents, oil lamps, etc. In contrast to Muhammad's Clothing, the company bears the whole cost of the ceremony. The women said that it is one of the happiest days for them and they all look forward to it. However, tokens of appreciation are not given at the end of the ceremony to all the employees, as at Muhammad's Clothing, but gifts are given only to employees who won the competitions.

There is a second annual celebration on the chairwoman's birthday. Every factory in the company organises a ritual after work in a nearby temple to bless her. All the employees attend it wearing white clothes. The company provides transport to enable employees to return home safely at night.According to employees both the chairwoman and the MD send cakes to employees of all the factories on their birthdays.

Rama's Shirts

I could not participate in annual ceremonies at Rama's Shirts but women told me that there is a celebration on the 1st of January every year. As at Amma's Fashions, but in contrast to Muhammad's Clothing, the company sponsors morning tea and lunch on that day and the employees get together and do certain activities, such as playing the children's game musical chairs within the factory premises. It is a holiday for them and they go home after lunch. The owner gives them a token of appreciation, consisting of dry rations and a piece of cloth of about six yards. As at Amma's Fashions a similar kind of a celebration occurs in April to celebrate Sinhala/Tamil New Year, sponsored by the company. The employees said that these are the two days on which the owner addresses them and he always asks them to tell him or the manager if they have issues. Women also told me that it is very rare that they do go to the owner, but instead go to the manager to resolve any issues.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced aspects of the location, physical size and other features of the three case study organisations. This builds on information provided in the Methodology Chapter on the choice of case study firms. I have concentrated on salary and status as these aspects demonstrate the extent of class inequality in the factories. Although there is a big difference in working conditions between the factories, at all of them the facilities provided to employees at different levels confirm status hierarchies, as do terms of address. The gendered segregation of jobs is an important feature. There are some women in lower management office roles and working as supervisors on the factory floor, but otherwise there is a sharp divide between male managers and women workers. I also looked at daily and annual routines to see how far they revolve around attempting to unify the labour force while showing respect to the owners, who personify each company. These also show how far the local

owners of the companies incorporate Sri Lankan customary distinctions, whether in terms of the annual calendar or ways of relating between hierarchically defined groups. In the next three chapters I look at each company in much more detail, trying to characterise the inequality regime of each factory and exploring how it is maintained.

Chapter 5

The ‘Despotic’ Inequality Regime at Muhammad’s Clothing Company

Introduction

This chapter characterises the unique features of Muhammad’s Clothing Company that contribute to what I call a ‘despotic’ inequality regime, one which expresses and reproduces gender, class, ethnic and even religious hierarchies in a particularly harsh form. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2017) ‘a despotic ruler has unlimited power over other people and often uses it unfairly and cruelly’. The most significant feature of the despotic inequality regime at Muhammed’s is the absolute power of family members who own the factory, and dominate senior management, over providing opportunities for employees. Managers are mostly unaccountable, even to each other; and do not try to restrain arbitrary decisions by themselves or more junior managers. Since proper records are not kept it would be impossible for anyone to challenge their decisions. Despite the existence of formal employment rights under Sri Lankan law the absence of voicing mechanisms means that workers cannot challenge management, and there is no redress against arbitrary decisions. There are some similarities in Sri Lankan working conditions to what Burawoy (2004) described as a ‘despotic factory regime’ in the US. Similarities exist in the state of working conditions, before the welfare state accorded factory workers some employment rights and emergency financial support for their families. The workers are subjected to abusive treatment by management, including the presence of fear and coercion and a general lack of respect for employees. But, rather than model my analysis on Burawoy’s, I chose the term ‘despotic’ because it seems a good way of characterising the patterns of control that I observed in this factory.

This chapter identifies how Muhammad’s Clothingconstructs its labour force through a range of employment processes. I begin by discussing the prevalence of hiring through informal contacts, used as a way of ensuring an unquestioning workforce. I then move on to the power of immediate superiors who make the final decisions in promotions. Then I discuss the use of training in the company which aimto instil managers’ notions of feminine respectability among lower level women workers. I

also consider the prevalence of sexual harassment, along with managers' attempts to control workers' sexual lives. I then consider how production is managed, highlighting abusive forms of worker control, including shouting at workers. Finally I discuss the extent of labour agency in the factory, pointing to a few managers who attempt to behave differently, and workers who may be guided by their attempt to maintain their dignity in this hostile environment. Formal or collective resistance is absent, because in past years management dismantled the trade union leaving only an ineffectual welfare society dominated by management to voice workers' grievances.

Construction of the Labour Force

This section discusses how the labour force is constructed, and what it tells us about key structural divisions in the factory. Beginning with the significance of informal networks used in hiring practices, I will then move on to the importance of the immediate superior's role in controlling access to promotions or imposing demotions. These practices have the effect of favoritism or nepotism. Next, training will be discussed, highlighting how an ideal of feminine respectability guides company training. I then highlight sexual harassment as an employment issue, and outline the ways in which management extends its purview even to interfering with consensual sexual relationships.

Hiring

Hiring practices at Muhammed's are dominated by the use of informal networks. Applicants' links with existing employees are used as the basis for hiring at all levels, but especially at the supervisory and worker levels. Formal channels, such as advertisements and or the use of recruitment agencies, are rarely adopted. According to Mr Y, the HR manager (Muslim/Married), the underlying rationale for using personal contacts is to gain compliance from newcomers. This is because the person who recommends the new recruit ensures that they work well, and the new recruit, mostly, listens to the person who recommended her/him (Fieldnotes 26/02/15).

Managers expect an employee who recommends a newcomer to be vigilant regarding the performance of the new recruit. This is done by placing the newcomer in the same section as the existing employee. Thus besides formal authority, an informal power relation influences the new recruit. A good example is Mr Ru, a machinist working in

the ‘button attach’ section, who was hired through a personal contact and put into the same section as his friend:

> Eight years before I came here with a friend of mine who works in the button section. There was no formal interview. I was taken because of my friend’s recommendation and attachedto the button section (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The newcomer works under the direction of his boss’s formal authority but is also under pressure to maintain a productive work output from the person who recommended her/him. Moreover, it is usually the more compliant employees, who have been working in the company for some time, who recommend newcomers. There are other employees who survive because they are good, fast workers, but they do not ask for favours for themselves or their friends. People who try to get work in the company without previous contacts do not seem to be very successful.

According to my fieldnotes (02/02/2015), I observed two interviews conducted by Mr Y (HR manager). A young man who had a relative working in the company was interviewed first. Mr Y asked only how the man was related to the existing employee, and then said he would hire him – mainly because of the recommendation of the man’s relative. The next applicant was a young Tamil woman who said that she was ready to serve in any position in the office. After looking at her qualifications, Mr Y told her that she could work in the accounting department and inquired about vacancies. He then told her that there were vacancies, but a girl could not fit into the job – due to working hours that extended into the night and required travel to different places – so he would inform her later if a suitable position became vacant. The woman thanked the manager and left.

The way in which the manager dealt with the woman applicant was significant in several ways. Firstly, people with personal connections are preferred to try to maintain a loyal and unquestioning workforce. Similarly, by responding arbitrarily or ‘despotically’ to the woman’s application the manager is discriminating against her, not only because the woman has no relatives working in the company but also because the manager refuses to employ a woman for this kind of job. Also, he does not trouble to ask about her particular circumstances or explore other ways of dealing with the long hours or travel necessary for the job; instead he bases his final decision on his own prejudices. Moreover, his decision is unaccountable: she is not told all of the

reasons for his refusal, nor are they recorded anywhere. So no one can criticize or challenge it. Finally he took the decision very quickly, and apparently without giving it much thought, suggesting he operates mainly on his prejudices rather than on professional judgement.

Management tries to tie workers to their jobs through extreme measures. For instance Ms Chathu was employed in order to repay the financial debts to the company incurred by her father, a company employee, before he died. A sum will be deducted from her monthly salary until the debt is paid. Ms Chathu's mother gave her consent for top management to employ her daughter under these conditions, without the daughter's knowledge, while the young woman was working in another company. In her interview with me Ms Chathu told me that management decided which job to give her irrespective of her qualifications, experience or preference, making her a trainee merchandiser because at the time she was hired another woman merchandiser was due to go on maternity leave. She still prefers her previous workplace, but thinks that she has had no choice in the matter.

> I have to travel in three buses to come to work. I am in this job because my mother wanted me to do it. I sometimes ask my mother why she sent me to this company. I still like the place I was working. That place is thousand times better than this company (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The family members of deceased employees are under pressure to repay company loans.Agreeing for Ms Chathu to work for the company with top management may have been the family's only option to pay back the loan. The company in turn makes use of women's subordination in the family to employ a responsible young woman.The company's practices in this matter are questionable, as they take advantage of a young women's subordination to her family, and benefit by receiving a responsible young woman as an employee. Ms Chathu told me that, although she resented her lack of choice in the matter she does her best, as she does not want to tarnish the name of her deceased father. Her words suggest that the company has obtained an assiduous worker through its despotic practices, while she herself cannot see any way out of her predicament.

Some applicants are interviewed and their skills tested, and it is not clear whether this applies only to those without connections to current or past employees, or if it sometimes takes place even when they do. For positions above the post of a manager,

the process is more formal. Group technical manager Mr Sri faced three interviews and competency tests before being hired, and the company took up references from his previous employers before the final interview.

> I forwarded an application, and on the first day Mr Sha had a brief chat with me. After that I had two interviews. In one of the interviews I designed a shirt and prepared blocks, and designed a pair of pants. I was called again and I was asked to do a fit-on, and to comment on it. Then another interview by the MD. He asked me some general questions, and by that time the company had taken references on me from many people in the industry with whom I earlier worked (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

This example illustrates that the company pays serious attention to practical skills. Before the final interview, possibly due to the absence of informal contacts, the company got references for Mr Sri from previous employers. The final interview was done by the Managing Director (MD), Mr Az, a member of the family that owns the company, and holds a position just below the chairman.

Even below this level Muhammed's places more emphasis on people's abilities than on formal qualifications. According to Mr R, a payroll executive, the interviewers did not question him about his educational or other qualifications but checked his certificates only perfunctorily.

> Sir Y interviewed me and Mr L, my current boss, had a look at my certificates but they did not ask questions about my qualifications (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

While it could be that the company is being sensible in believing that skills and experience matter more than qualifications, I was told that the company is actually reluctant to hire people with strong educational qualifications. Ms T (HR executive) told me that Mr Y (HR manager) does not like to hire people with many qualifications:

> Sir Y asked about my qualifications and said 'I do not like to hire people with lot of qualifications' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Ms T believes there are three reasons for the prejudice against formal qualifications. Firstly, according to Ms T, most of the managers in the top positions of the organisation do not have formal qualifications themselves, but they have worked their way up the career ladder by gaining experience. This makes them suspicious of the value of qualificationswithout practical work experience. Secondly, the company pays salaries which are lower than garment factories of comparable size, for instance

Amma's Fashions, so they may need to choose employees who have fewer alternatives (I discussed wages and salaries in the overview of the three organisations in chapter on organisational context). Thirdly, but most important, Ms T is of the view that qualified people will not tolerate the disrespectful behaviour of most of the managers, and that they therefore tend to leave, as they are resourceful enough to do so. This may be because people who are qualified hold a certain social status and resent disrespect more than other employees, or it might be that they have other alternatives. In fact after completing my fieldwork I got to know that Ms T, a management graduate, and Mr Sri, who had postgraduate qualifications and is now reading for a PhD, have left the organisation. So perhaps top management has learned through experience that they can only dominate and keep employees who lack the social status that is associated with higher qualifications.

Recruitment campaigns are another way of hiring shop floor employees, especially women. The company uses these to hire young unmarried women without household work responsibilities. Mr A[25] (Group HR manager – Sinhala/Buddhist/Married) told me that they go to remote areas, including the war-affected Northern and Eastern provinces, to hire mostly unmarried young women who have just finished school. There are several reasons, I was told, why these women are preferred. Firstly, according to Mr A, these women are unlikely to object to any of the company's measures, as they have too little experience of work to have any point of comparison. So they appear to management as a potentially unquestioning workforce. Secondly, young women from the countryside are also paid low wages. Although Muhammed Clothing's MD claims that the industry pays well for employee commitment, shop floor workers at Muhammed's are the lowest paid out of all three factories, relative to their managers. Although workers earn less at the smaller-scale Rama's Shirts (see chapter on organisational context), so do managers. At Muhammad's Clothing managers earn more; the steepness of the gradient between the earnings of the lowest and the highest salaries in the factory is approximately 30 times. Thirdly, management believes that young women without children at home make better, more committed workers. The Managing Director (MD) MD, a family member, explained that only

[25] Mr A is the head of HR in the company, and is an ex-army officer.

women without other responsibilities have the flexibility and freedom to be available all the hours they are needed at work.

> The garment business is very challenging, so for a female until they get married they can run around. They have to get married, have children then they cannot fulfil these responsibilities. [Once] Children are grown up they can come and work here. This business demands you a lot but it is a very well paid industry but 100% commitment has to be there (Muslim/Married).

However, hiring young workers from outside Colombo means the company has to be able to reassure their families that they will be well protected from the excitements independence might bring. Once hired these women are brought to Colombo in company vehicles and live in company-maintained hostels under strict supervision. The company not only attempts to control women's bodily demeanour and their freedom to travel, but they also attempt to control access to heterosexual or homosexual relationships. Thus one of the main duties of the company hostel matrons is to ensure the conduct of woman meets company policy, and more specifically to prevent them from developing relationships, including stifling any homosexual relationships between themselves. I will discuss this further later in the chapter.

At Muhammed's, employees can also be fired at the whim of senior management – reflecting the absolute power of the family members. While doing fieldwork I observed how the chairman suddenly dismissed a Muslim woman who had recently begun working on the factory floor. Although there are some Muslim women working in the head office, who, like the fired woman, wear a hijab, it appeared that the Muslim family who owns the company feels uncomfortable employing an identifiably Muslim woman on the shop floor because they know the women are treated so discourteously. Mr Y, the Muslim HR manager, told me that only the chairman does not like to hire Muslim women because they do not work as hard as Sinhala women. But Ms Pu, the Sinhala Ladder teacher (Ladder is a training program which I discuss later), said that knowing how badly the women in the factory floor are treated the chairman might not want to see a Muslim woman exposed to the same bad treatment, especially by the male Sinhala shop floor managers (Fieldnotes 07/01/15). She thought it was a conscious policy on the part of management not to employ Muslim women to work on the shop floor, especially doing manual work, because it is too low and degrading, even though management employs Muslim women in the office or at supervisory

levels. I also came to know that one of the women supervisors is Muslim, although since she does not wear a headscarf this might not be well known among managers or the other shop floor workers. We see here a nest of entangled themes: the prerogatives of senior managers, their apparent awareness of how badly machinists are treated, and their discrimination between ethnic groups. In this case discrimination takes the form of trying to ensure that Muslim women are kept at home, or in respectable jobs, rather than discriminating in their favour, as compared to Sinhala women. They protect Muslim women, especially identifiably Muslim women, from the degrading environment the managers create in the factory.

Promotion and Demotion

Promotions also reflect despotic practices, such as a lack of formal procedures and the immediate superior's absolute power to make promotion decisions. Decisions about promotion discriminate between workers with little apparent justification. For example, Mr A, the Group HR manager, promotes and demotes at will. He even demoted one woman and promoted another on the same day. Ms P (HR assistant – Master Trainer of the Ladder training program/Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried) had told her colleagues that she might not be able to continue as the master trainer after her marriage. Mr A got to know of this and immediately took her off that position, and assigned her to work as an HR assistant in the factory HR office. He then appointed Ms A (Trainee HR assistant – Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried) as the master trainer with immediate effect. Ms P was highly dissatisfied with the decision of Mr A, a decision which he took without consulting her. She told me she was not sure now how long she will stay in the organisation, and in fact Ms T (HR executive) informed me that Ms P had left two months later (Fieldnotes 29/01/15). This example displays many of the characteristics of promotion practices. The decision was taken without any discussion with the employee and was based on the manager's own prejudices and assumptions. He did not bother to inquire whether the woman could accommodate her job and marriage, never mind encourage her to do so. His decision was unaccountable, as Ms P was not told the reason for the demotion nor was it recorded. Since Ms P had no mechanism to voice her concerns she could only leave the organisation as an outlet for her grievance. Yet Mr A is respected by the top management of the company, and was chosen as one of the speakers for the New Year's ceremony in January 2015, as discussed in the chapter on organisational context.

Overall, the promotion process is obscure, with workers unaware of how or why promotions are given, leading to suspicions of nepotism and favouritism. Mr R, a young payroll executive, expressed his resentment:

> Me: Is there a promotion procedure in the organisation? R: No, I still do not know about such a thing. No one asks for promotions but they are given. Even if you apply you will not get one(Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

This is a good example of management practices that characterise the promotion process;promotion is not applied for but given arbitrarily with decisions based mainly on the discretion of the immediate superior. I asked Ms T, an HR executive, who makes the ultimate decision regardingpromotions, and she replied:

> The head of the department makes the decision and passes it on to the top… So once a decision is taken by a head of department normally the directors approve it… Even if a person who does not work is recommended by the superior the top people agree with it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The absence of any explicit criteria for promotion leaves employees with suspicions of nepotism. Ms Chathu, a young trainee merchandiser, expressed her resentment:

> There is another girl in my department who is one year older than me and she is a relative of the manager. She is always given special treatments, promotions, increments and everything on time (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Moreover, enabling managers to promote their favourites also potentially leads to sexual harassment, for instance such a process might favor conventionally attractive young women, or depend upon how nice women are to their superiors.

Promotion may also operate as a way to buy off opposition or reward compliance. Ms T (HR executive) told me that Ms K, a middle-aged woman (Counsellor – Sinhala/Buddhist/Married) with more than 15 years of experience, once attempted to form a union. To dissuade her, while retaining her in employment, the top management distracted her via a promotion to the post of counsellor, despite her lack of any qualifications or experience (she was the one employee at Muhammed's who I was not allowed to interview). Here a promotion seems to have been used to suppress the voice of an employee who did not comply, as the promotion operated like a bribe. Similarly, appointing someone without proper qualifications to a position such as counsellor can be damaging because Ms K has no proper knowledge and experience to deal with the issues of employees. As I discuss later, I observed how harsh Ms K was to the workers.

Another barrier to promotion to positions of general manager and above (for managers), is not being a family member. Mr Sri, for instance, thinks that he is unlikely to be considered for promotion because he is not a member of the owner's family, nor even a Muslim.

> Me: Do you expect a promotion? S: No, at the moment, but the next promotion is to be a GM (General Manager). All of them are family members and there are no Sinhalese GMs in the company. Because of that I do not believe a Sinhala person will get a GM's position (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

This is a very good example of a managerial practice that stifles advancement on the basis of ethnicity and gender, since the top positions are in effect reserved for Muslim men. It also ensures that the power of family members cannot be challenged by anyone at the same level of the company hierarchy. Mr Sri seems to have been respected by his colleagues, but ultimately left the company. I suggest that lack of promotion opportunities might have been one of the reasons for him to leave.

However, in a company like Muhammad's accepting a promotion can be a mixed blessing, since once promoted the employee is indebted to management and would feel obliged to follow their instructions. Indeed employees suspect that promotions may be offered to ensure their compliance and elicit more work. Ms Tha (Training line instructress) in her interview told me she was hoping for a promotion, and explained that she had already been given a lot of added responsibilities in consequence.

> I am expecting a promotion because I can make use of my skills but I have my doubts. Me: Why? T: The decision has to be made by Sir A (Group HR manager). I am the training line instructress but [now], besides training employees, at present I have to handle almost all the problems of sewing operations on the factory floor, and if promoted I have to be responsible mainly for achieving targets (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Ms Tha had therefore been assigned more duties without additional remuneration, even though she might not be promoted.

It seems that some middle-aged women machinists refuse promotion as otherwise they cannot act as they might otherwise wish. For instance, Ms L is one of the most skilled and experienced machinists, middle-aged and married, whom the company wishes to retain. She told me that she had been offered a promotion to supervisor many times but she always refused. She said that if she accepts the promotion she has to agree with

the managers even when they are wrong. Thus she prefers to remain an ordinary machinist, she says, to keep her dignity.

Training

The company has no formal training policy and the employees are not given any proper training, on or off the job, or even an induction. The HR manager, Mr Y, is of the view that training is not essential because, he says, intelligent people will be able to do a job without special training.

> We don't need to train everybody. We don't want to waste time. If we have a new machine we have to train relevant people for that particular job. But doing that there is a certain amount of cost. Therefore we depend on the few people who have trained on that. The second line is not trained. Therefore in case of a turnover it is a problem. But Sri Lankans are very intelligent. And they can pick up on the job very well.

What happens instead is that employees bear the costs of training themselves, in stress and lost production. Ms Chathu, a trainee merchandiser whom I mentioned before, has learnt her job only by doing it herself and getting help from other people.

> I was not given proper training by the company, and I did not know anything about merchandising. So I spoke to the IT department and got time to learn the computer system, and there was a senior young man in the department I asked and he also helped me to learn a lot (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

<u>The Ladder Training Program</u>

Ladder is the only training program at Muhammad's Clothing. It was created in order to meet a compliance requirement set by one of the international buyers (clothing retailer GAP). The training is compulsory for women shop floor workers. According to Mr A, it is a women's empowerment program. The name implies that its purpose is to help women to advance their careers and to widen their horizons. But this is not how it operates in practice. Instead, it has been designed to get Sri Lankan rural women workers to adopt a more modest dress style and behaviour, in accordance with urban middle class tastes. It is deeply gendered, not only in its expectations regarding young women, but also in the presumption that middle class women should be responsible for inculcating respectable behaviour in lower-class women. This is a responsibility the women HR staff seem to accept without question, happily repeating common prejudices about working class rural young women.

The full name of the program is Ladder-PACE (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement). It was designed by Muhammed's Clothing, which sought the advice of a local trainer (Mr S – a Sinhala man). The trainers say that the Sri Lankan based staff of GAP helped determine the content of the program. The company initially selected one or two women (called Ladder teachers) from each factory (in all 13 factories) who were trained by Mr S. Then these women lead the training for the women factory floor workers in their respective factories. The training program cycle runs every year for five to six months, with 50 young women from each factory getting trained each year. The program runs across five days of the week, with 10 young women released from work for one hour every day for a week (9 a.m. to 10 a.m.). From time to time Ladder teachers from all of the factories come to the head office for further training from the outside trainer.

I observed one of the training sessions (for the trainers), which was on the problem of how women should deal with men bullying them. The trainer attempted to convey the message that women should take the blame for men's bullying behavior, or at least correct their own behavior so that they will not invite unwanted attention from men. The session was organised around a role-play. The scenario was that some trishaw drivers[26] cracked rude jokes to a woman machinist who is returning home after work. The topic of the lesson was to consider how to cope with this situation using the knowledge gained from the Ladder program.

What the trainer taught crossed some of the eight areas the program was meant to cover. The lessons to be learnt were as follows:

Communication – Ignore the situation. Do not change your behaviour when you see the men.

Stress management – Control emotions and maintain normal behaviour.

Problem solving/decision making – Consider why trishaw drivers crack jokes at women? Is it their dress? Make-up? Identify the cause and get rid of it hereafter.

Successful performance – Do not walk alone, go in pairs.

[26]A trishaw is a light three-wheeled motor vehicle that can accommodate four people including the driver. This is one of the most common modes of transport in Sri Lanka and mostly young men from the lower social class are the drivers of these vehicles. There are trishaw parking spaces by the sides of the road, and the drivers park there and wait for customers.

Legal literacy – Lodging a complaint with the police regarding the incident will make the situation worse. In future try to avoid such instances by not walking along lonely roads. (Fieldnotes 26/02/15).

In other words the trainer assumes that it is women's fault that drew the men's attention, and suggests that women should identify the reasons for bullying such as their own improper dress or make-up. Ultimately, women are given the message that making a complaint to the police is troublesome. In contrast, women have to find solutions by themselves such as not walking alone to avoid men's reactions.

The role-play tries in part to deal with local discourse that FTZ women garment workers are not respectable women, not by challenging this discourse as incorrect but by modifying women's behavior. So women have to internalise a new way of behaving, dressing, talking, etc., in a particular way to be accepted mainly by the middle class. In particular, they are meant to alter their style of dress, which is associated with a distinctive, and assertive identity. According to Hewamanne (2003), FTZ garment factory workerswear brightly coloured shalwars and gagra cholis embroidered with gold/silver beads, or 'titanic dresses' and high heels. Another prominent aspect is a multi-coloured dot (pottu) placed on their forehead. They also wear gold jewellery and hair accessories to work. Their favourite hairstyle is the 'bump', which is created by backcombing a portion of their hair in the front into a puff and making some curls. Cheap handbags, sandals and fake brand-name watches are also common among them. Hewamanne suggests that the young women show no interest in adopting a middle class identity, at least at the time she was writing in 2004. It seems that the training is intended to encourage them to see the benefits of adopting middle class forms of feminine respectability and to accept men's authority without questioning it.

Some of the people involved in providing the Ladder program are quite frank in their derision towards rural women. Ms T (an HR Executive) rubbishes the women factory workers, who she sees as unacceptable until they change their ways to mimic middle class mores:

> To talk honestly, even the girls, most of them have a tendency to quarrel. They try to get revenge. But I think through the Ladder we can brainwash… I have observed the behavior of those who have completed the program and there is a difference in the behavior in the majority but still there are people whom we cannot change. Even in the way they dress there is a difference. Actually from

> early days the garment girls are called 'Keli'[27] but now there is a change: they do not wear improper clothes, tie up their hair and do not wear huge tussle-type earnings, do not keep the handkerchief in the hand and meddle with it, roll the umbrella all the time when walking, and so on, these are now minimum, most of them dress in a decent manner. Me: Do you think the Ladder program has an impact on such behavior? T: Yes I think there is. Within the program they are being taught about how to get dressed, how to manage finances, how to behave properly and so on (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Ms T's description of the shop floor women workers expresses the wider social ideology of the superiority of urban, middle class people, and rural women's difficulties in acquiring middle class respectability. Whether lower class women from rural areas change or not, Ms T thinks that the upper social classes have the authority to 'brainwash' rural women with the use of training to accept the 'do's' and don'ts' of the middle class. She believes that Ladder should instill middle class respectability in lower class rural women. This is obviously contradictory because empowerment should not be about instilling others' views but should enable people's capacity to express themselves and their own interests. Moreover, issues about dress, decorum and respectability are seen as just as important as the potentially more useful aspects of the program, such as managing finance or building a career, which might lead to economic independence. The significance of adopting middle class forms of dress is stressed also by women trainers having to wear a saree whenever they participate in a Ladder activity. This also implies how much control the company seeks on women's choice of dress.

Dealing with Sexual Harassment, Sexual Relations and Employees' Personal Lives

Besides the organisational practices I have discussed above, Muhammed's is characterized by managers' attempts to interfere with the sexuality of its employees.

The presence of sexual harassment and bullying and proper responses to these behaviours are pervasive. Management seems to be conscious of sexual harassment as an issue in the factory, because of the large number of young unmarried women working there and the local discourse about the lack of chastity among women employees in the garment industry (Lynch, 1999b), which I discussed in the chapter on country setting. It is possible that the habit of referring to factory workers as

[27] 'Keli' - meaningin Sinhala is pieces or objects

'children' continues partly as a way of de-sexualising workers and discouraging sexual relations. If so, it doesn't seem to work very well.

At Muhammed's, management sometimes uses the bad reputation of women garment workers as an excuse to do nothing about sexual harassment. Their actions, at least as they report them, are highly contradictory. On the one hand they believe that sexual harassment is unavoidable, but they also claim that the company takes serious action if a complaint is made. According to the MD, a member of the owner's family, the company takes rapid action:

> Then zero tolerance for sexual harassment, if there's a complaint against somebody and if it is proven, it can be anybody, he has to go home. Having said this you can't eliminate this because you are working with people. So it's a common problem in organisations. Now we have found certain cases of sexual harassment and we have fired immediately (Muslim/Married).

Mr A, the group HR manager, decided to fire a man who was found to be involved in a sexual harassment which has not been proved yet.

> I always take firm decisions when I come across sexual harassment especially if it is regarding a woman. For example an electrician whom I have hired, while working in a remote factory has forced a woman for an immoral behaviour. I immediately instructed to take a written declaration from the woman and I interdicted the man and issued a charge sheet. I will definitely fire him. I have already made that decision (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Although it is good to know that the company takes action against harassers, anyone accused is not in a position to defend themselves, so their treatment is also despotic. Prior decision to fire the employee is an arbitrary decision based on partial evidence, implying managers' absolute power. According to Mr A, a woman, the victim has made a complaint and it seems that the accused will not get a hearing. However, no one can question the managers due to lack of records. Finally, no redress is available for the person who loses their job. However, because I left the organisation before the inquiry I do not know whether the manager dismissed the man or not. The most important point is that in a despotic regime like this a woman's confidence to make complaints regarding sexual harassments might be very low, so management probably only deals with a fraction of instances of reported sexual harassment.

Nor is sexual harassment always recognised for what it is. Some men seem to believe that sexual harassment involves consensual sex. Some men think that there are women

who develop relationships willingly with a few men who are managers at the factory floor. Mr Ru, a machinist, believes that women are advantaged by their ability to grant sexual favours:

> R: Some women develop relationships with top people. It is done with their consent. We do not know much about such things. I mean about one out of ten managersdoes such things. Top means below the level of pattern makers. Me: Why do they do such things? R: They have advantages. Say for example if the production manager is having a relationship with a supervisor she can get leave easily. Also she is not shouted at for not achieving targets(Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

I suggest that this man is jealous of the sexual power of women, which he does not possess, but it indicates that within the despotic regime managers may have relationships with women, and that other managers turn a blind eye. However, such behaviour cannot be challenged due to lack of records and checks on the behaviours of managers by the top management.

Women report other experiences that sound like sexual harassment, although they do not use the term. Ms T, an HR executive experienced difficulties in the early days in the organisation when she was 'bullied' by some men.

> Within the office they crack jokes at you, especially when you are new, so in a way it is also a nuisance and sometimes we feel uncomfortable. You feel mental pressure when these men raise unnecessary questions in the middle of a gathering (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

I observed how men crack jokes about women or make comments in their presence and the women appear to feel helpless. This mostly happens when women and men are together in the canteen. Although women and men sit at separate tables, they directly look at women and comment on their attire, hairstyle and even about their make-up. Yet I have not observed any objection from the management or from women for such actions (Fieldnotes 21/01/2015).

Some managers explain this harassment as workers testing newcomers, even when the target is a woman:

> Me: Do you have any experience regarding bullying, verbally or otherwise taking place within the organisation? S: Yes, when there is a newcomer some of the existing employees try to neglect him/her. They do not listen to the newcomer and sometimes try to ignore them as well (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Managers' asking intrusive questions could also be seen as a form of harassment. Ms Chathu, a young trainee merchandiser, is of the view that some managers try to interfere with one's personal life and are only pretending that they try to help women, when really they are trying to get close to them or hear details of their private lives.

> Me: How does the company handle grievances? C: There is no process. If we try to tell them our grievances they try to take advantage of it. It is unofficial. My boss once asked me about my private life. I have told him I have no problems (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

It seems to be taken for granted that managers are free to interfere in women's lives, although Ms Chathu refuses.

Although preventing sexual harassment should rightfully fall under the responsibility of management, the company also sees itself as needing to deal with even consensual sexual relationships, with strict controls on women's sexual behaviour. Homosexuality is not accepted, and different controls are in place to try ensure that women do not develop love affairs with other women. A matron of a women's hostel, Ms S, told me that one of her main duties is to go to each room in the night, at least twice, to check whether girls sleep together, as the company is very strict about this (Fieldnotes 05/02/15). (My interviewees did not comment on homosexual relations between men, and since there is no warden at the men's hostel there is no one to observe relationships between the men.)

Mr Sri, group technical manager, conformsto the idea that he needs to intervene (even though, as I discuss below, he is kinder in other respects). Mr Sri pointed to a case where a private affair had spilled out into the factory. In an informal chat he told me that there was a lesbian couple in his section who lived in a company-maintained hostel. Later one of the women wanted to marry a man and her partner got angry and started fighting with her even while at work. These fights disturbed the work, and as a solution Mr Sri advised the woman who wanted to marry to leave the organisation and go home (to a remote village). The woman listened to him and left the organisation while the other woman is still working there (Fieldnotes 17/12/14). This is an example of how the company resolves issues, but at the expense of women's freedom and dignity.

Management also may penalise consensual heterosexual relationships. Ms Tha, the training line instructress, told me that she can remember how about fifteen years ago the chairman, Mr K, dismissed a young woman machinist and a man working as a mechanic for developing a love affair. Mr Sri, in his interview, said that in his department an unmarried woman had a love affair with a married man, and he intervened to resolve it to prevent the man breaking up his family.

> There an unmarried woman pattern maker had an affair with a male pattern maker, a married person. He was a person who had a very good family life, so this problem crept into the department and it became a problem in the department as well… so it became a problem for us. Then I spoke to them …then I went to the man's home and spoke to the wife and told her that I would take the responsibility to solve this problem. Later we brought a marriage proposal to the woman and this person is a psychologist [she does not know about it] who is a relation of one of our employees, and we arranged for them to meet each other and to talk. Later the psychologist told us that this girl will never marry a man… but she takes revenge on men due to getting raped by an army soldier when she was very young. However, after we intervened the woman left and we got to know that after leaving the company now she is living together with a manager in the merchandising department of this company.

The managers seem to feel that they have a right even to meet the family members of employees when intervening in personal issues. In this case a psychologist was used in an unethical manner, without either parties' consent, and was told the personal problems of the woman. As a result of managers' intervening the woman has left the organisation but there is no redress for the woman who lost her job. Even after the woman left, the company is interested in following her movements.

Managing Production

Let me now develop a discussion on how employees are managed on the production floor and what this tells us about relations between workers and managers. At Muhammad's Clothing, there is ample evidence to illustrate the dictatorial nature of the regime, especially the limited but harsh measures management uses to try to maintain output. This is because being an industry in which deadlines are critical, employees from top to bottom experience the pressure of targets. Shouting and passing the blame to the next level without accepting one's own faults are pervasive. The workers at the lowest level where women are the majority have to absorb this accumulated pressure without any means to object.

Target Setting and Shouting

On the factory floor each day is filled with the pressure of hourly and daily targets. Managers say that this is because if shipments get delayed then to satisfy international buyers the company has to send orders by airfreight at very high cost. Thus the company has a serious financial interest in achieving targets. Usually the day begins with shouting and this continues all day. According to my fieldnotes (10/02/15), machinists who get behind even by a few minutes are shouted at by the counsellor Ms K, whom I discussed before. It is not only that the managers raise their voices when talking to workers, but without any concern for employee dignity they even use rude words.

According to Ms T (HR Executive), shouting is a way of denying one's own faults and passing the blame to another rather than resolving issues without blaming others.

> Me: Why do they shout? T: It is due to the pressure. The person who gets the pressure from the superior releases it to the subordinate. …When the shipments get delayed the bosses shout at the factory manager, he then shouts at the production manager then he shouts at the factory floor employees, I mean to the supervisors, and then the supervisors shout at the machine operators. The blame goes from top to bottom (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Employees face such a high level of stress in meeting targets that, as I discussed in the chapter on organisational context, nearly 30% of all factory floor employees visit the sick room daily. This is the only way that they can get a break, or some sympathy. The nurse told me that in the factory whenever a mistake is made the supervisors and the managers shout at the workers and most of the women come crying to her. Similarly, one of the hostel matrons (Ms S - Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed) told me that at least one girl every day is crying when she comes home to the hostel, as they are being shouted at by their supervisors for not meeting targets (Fieldnotes 26/01/15).

Shouting seems to be most managers' only way of trying to meet targets. They seem not to have tried to develop long-term plans to deal with the issues that may lead to missed targets, such as absenteeism or prior training, and instead use shouting to push workers in the short term. Ms Tha (Training line instructress) told me that if the company handled issues faced by the machinists properly, then 'unnecessary' shouting and pressurising employees could be minimized. She said an employee might fail to meet a target due to several reasons: often targets are not achieved because of faulty

machines or workers' lack of understanding of how to handle the piece of cloth, etc. She says that 'whatever it is, if we resolve it the employee can meet the target. Most of the supervisors have no understanding about the issues and they try to reach a target by shouting all the time' (Fieldnotes 23/01/15).

Ms Tha also thinks that it is men's unwillingness to listen to women that often underlies the shouting. She says that whereas some experienced women can handle the sewing operations and resolve the issues without shouting, the men are not ready to listen to women's explanations of the difficulty in sewing items.

> The problem is those men at the top like production managers they do not like to listen to us. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mrs Tha also compares her own ways of dealing with employees who are not reaching their target. Some of the women supervisors are skilled and experienced and Ms Tha is one of the supervisors who says that she tries to address individual issues and achieve targets without shouting.

> All the children in the line love me. Most of the time I discuss with them, teach them easy methods. I cannot shout at them but I achieve targets. If a child is not suitable for a certain task we have to have another child for that because all are not the same (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

This is an example of a different management practice as it illustrates how targets are achieved without shouting (although the comments still betray a belittling attitude to the machinists through her taken-for-granted use of the word 'children' for them). This supervisor maintains a good relationship with the employees and she discusses with the employees. She also takes time to teach easy ways of doing the operations, and understanding individual differences the supervisor assigns tasks to employees based on their individual skills.

However, men are also the butt of managers' humiliating interactions with workers. The managers use rude words without any concern for the dignity of the employees. Besides talking about the factory floor employees as 'children' the managers shout at and humiliate them. I was told by a woman supervisor that a man who worked as a supervisor left because the production manager used a bad word, 'Kari Balla' in Sinhala, which means 'dog fucker' in English. Similarly, Mr Ru, a machinist, is of the

view that the managers have no concern for employee dignity and shout at them in public, challenging men's masculinity because they do what is seen as women's work.

> The previous factory manager shouts even for the slightest thing, and use bad words and he asks men 'you bugger do you do? You buggers should wear frocks instead of trousers[28]'. There are instances where your dignity becomes zero. When he says such things in public it is difficult(Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

As previously described, shouting is experienced by employees at all levels, not just by the shop floor workers, although shop floor workers get the worst of it. Mr R, the Payroll executive, says that he is shouted at if he is late, even if it is because he worked late the night before.

> Even me now in the morning I come in late because I go home late after work. But according to HR rules I can't come late. So they shout at me (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

I myself observed how the chairman, Mr K, shouted at Mr Y (HR manager – Muslim/Married) for hiring a Muslim woman who wore traditional Muslim attire (Fieldnotes 07/01/15).

These are examples of managers disrespecting their employees. Most of the managers do not have any experience of the different sewing operations, and do not take the trouble to listen to employees' explanations of why they have been unable to reach a target, or even listen to the opinions of experienced women machinists'. Rather than admit this, or accept their own weaknesses, they pass the blame down to the next level. Moreover, it seems to be taken for granted that managers can shout at the employees at all levels at will, with no comeback from the employees. No one can question or challenge the managers because there are no records or checks on how managers' behave nor any attempt to record altercations.

Management puts meeting deadlines far ahead of its other obligations to workers, including legal requirements about the observation of public holidays. Irrespective of the fact that majority of the employees are Sinhalese Buddhists, the company expects their employees to work on full moon *poya* days that are religiously important to

[28] Sinhala word 'Umba' is somewhat similar to the word bugger in English and treated as impolite depending on the context as well as the way it is said. The translation:'Umbala (plural of 'umba'You buggers) mokada karanne (what you do?) Umbala kalisan (trousers) newei (instead) gaum (frocks) andapan (wear). (You buggers should wear frocks instead of trousers). Even the word 'andapan' is impolite depending on the context and the way it is said. 'Andinna' (wear) is the polite word.

Buddhists. In Sri Lanka a full moon *poya* day is supposed to be a public, Bank and a mercantile holiday[29] so that Buddhists can attend religious ceremonies in temples. During my fieldwork the decision to work on an upcoming poya day was made by management and communicated to employees at the welfare meeting, which is the only interface to discuss employees' grievances with the management. I understood that the 'welfare meeting'[30] is governed by management, and employee voices are suppressed or handled in an informal and abusive manner. According to fieldnotes of 27/01/15, I observed a discussion among two managers and a woman executive soon after the welfare meeting to discuss whether to work on the coming full moon *poya* day. Mr Y (HR manager) and Ms Dep[31], a middle-aged woman (Senior HR executive – Sinhala/Buddhist/Married), attended the meeting and as soon as they returned to their office Mr A (Group HR manager) asked what happened. Mr Y said 'I told them that we have decided to work on the *poya* day as usual and no one uttered a word, so it is confirmed and we can work without any difficulty'. Then Ms Dep also said that no one questioned about it so there will not be any problem.

This is a good example of a managerial decision imposed by the employer on employees without allowing employees any effective way to express their views. Although there might have been grumbling beforehand, at the meeting no one challenged the management's decision. Although employees did not resist at the meeting, afterwards some of them indicated to me their resentment for the discriminatory practice. They are of the view that it is unfair for Buddhists to have to work on a *poya* day. Ms Chathu a young trainee merchandiser, sees discrimination. She thinks it is unfair that in a company in which the majority of employees are Buddhists but working in a Muslim-owned organisation they do not get the day off, whereas the few Muslim employees there are, are given time off for their religious observances.

> This is a Muslim-owned organisation but the majority working here are Buddhists. Most of the *poya* days we are working and I think it is wrong.

[29] I discussed the legality of *poya* holiday in the chapter on country context.

[30] 'Welfare', in English,is a commonly used word and even lower-level employees use it instead of the Sinhala term 'Subasadaka Sangamaya'.

[31] Ms Dep is an employee who complies with the managers irrespective of the managers being right or wrong.She has being working in the company for nearly two decades.

> Because for Muslims they are off on every Friday to go to the mosque (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Similarly, Mr Ru a young machinist, compares company policies and how the company treats employees of different religions and ethnicities differently.

> We work on *poya* days. Catholics are given holidays for Christmas but we work. Tamils are given holidays for Thai Pongal but we being Sinhala Buddhists we are not given a holiday on the *poya* day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The above examples reflect how the company does not shy away from apparently discriminating against Sinhala Buddhists, the majority living in the country, by making *poya* a working day and preventing Sinhala Buddhists' from attending religious ceremonies in temples. The company's main consideration is the effect of holidays on production and Sinhala Buddhists being a majority, so it would not be good for production for the majority of employees to be on holiday at the same time. In contrast other minorities receiving holidays has no major effect on production and only Muslim men, who are very few in number, are given one hour off on every Friday. (In Sri Lanka Muslim women are not allowed to visit the mosques so the issue of time off on Fridays does not apply to them).

It is worth pointing out that although much of the abusive behaviour seems to start out by criticising workers for holding up production, for instance through lateness or absence, it rapidly escalates, including interfering with people's personal lives. In his interview with me Mr R, the payroll executive, explained that while on sick leave due to an accident he had to be on the mobile phone the whole day to give guidance to the person acting for him.

> I met with an accident and had a fracture in my arm and was on leave for about three weeks. I could not rest properly because I had to be on the phone to instruct the person working on behalf of me (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

More abusive behaviour takes place when someone is late. Management tends to make perceived misdemeanours an excuse for managers to show their authority through abusive and intrusive explosions of anger, which workers and staff are expected to put up with. There are many examples. For instance, Ms T, an HR Executive, told me, with tears in her eyes, how she had been humiliated by Mr A for coming late to work.

> You know one day I went home and I was one hour late to work the next day. I was seated in a chair at the reception for about two hours. Sir A did not take me

> into the office… the office staff when passing me, you know they ask me why and so on. I was very sad. I had a huge amount of tension that day and I was writing a letter of resignation. I was feeling so sad (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

But not all these instances really reflect considerations of production or output. The workers see themselves as being punished based on the prejudices of managers, but we could also see them as attempts by managers to demonstrate their right to exercise discipline. I came across a particularly abusive incident on the day I was observing the main HR office. Mr A (Group HR manager) tightly yanked the hair of Mr R (payroll executive) and said 'This is too long. If you do not come with a proper haircut tomorrowI will give you a haircut'. The young man was angry but did not utter a word, just tried to remove his hair from Mr A's grip. He suppressed his anger but when I interviewed him he said he was not happy and intended to leave. I came to know later that he left the company (Fieldnotes 29/01/15). Similarly, Mr K is very strict on the use of mobile phones and he punishes all workers (not managers) whom he sees using a phone. Ms Pun (Matron – Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried) told me that one day when the chairman came to the factory a young woman was getting a call. He grabbed the phone and dashed it to the ground, the woman could do nothing about it (Fieldnotes 29/01/2015).

As also seen in the case of Mr R's long hair, managers conflate their own authority as managers over factory workers with what they seem to see as their right to insist on their idea of proper standards of dress, especially for women. For instance, Ms P (HR Assistant – Master trainer – Ladder program) told me that the company expects certain standards in employees' attire and she has to wear a saree whenever she attends a Ladder activity. One day she went to meet the Ladder teachers wearing jeans and a top. She told me that she came to know that Mr A (Group HR manager) has said if she goes again in that attire he will 'remove the jeans from her head'[32] (Fieldnotes 29/01/2015).

These are examples of despotic practices and they display the characteristics of disciplining employees any way managers decide. Thus the manager decides what sort of actions to use to discipline employees, mostly based on prejudice and impulse, and

[32] Since it is not possible to remove jeans from the head, the meaning of his expression is that she will be given something impossible as punishment if she does it again.

without asking an employee about the reason for her/his behavior. It seems to be an arbitrary use of force and humiliation to teach employees their place.

Some of the staff in HR are aware that abusive behaviour may lie behind the high turnover of labour at Muhammad's Clothing but can do nothing about the way their superiors act. Muhammed's seems to follow the general trend of high labour turnover among workers on the shop floor, and there is also high absenteeism. One day I was listening to a conversation between Ms T (HR executive) and Ms K (Counsellor). They were reviewing the factory absence reports and they were of the same view that the absence rate was increasing rapidly but they said that they still could not find a reason for it (Fieldnotes 23/01/15). I suggested that the underlying reason for the high labour turnover at the lower levels is that there are many factories around Muhammad's Clothing, so women have plenty of choice of jobs. However, Mr R, a payroll executive, said that despotic practices are the reasons for high absenteeism and turnover, and especially shouting:

> In this factory supervisors frequently shout at the employees and it is one of the reasons for labour turnover and even for employees being absent.

This is an example of how an employee sees that labour turnover and absenteeism are affected by despotic practices. As I discuss below, employees have only their exit power as a source of resistance to despotic practices such as shouting.

Labour Agency

I will now take a look at labour agency. In observing labour agency at Mohammad's and, later, the other two case study factories, I will follow the work of Carswell and De Neve (2013), who recommend moving beyond the usual industrial relations focus on acquiescence and resistance to consider a broader range of actions and attitudes through which workers may try to express their own interests. This is especially useful in contexts in which formal or collective resistance is not possible. I will consider agency in the context of my case studies as the practices of workers whose activity is restricted, mainly by their lack of material, human and social capital, to make use of the best options available to them and turn them to their advantage (Carswell and De Neve, 2013). According to Carswell and De Neve, even worker resilience can be seen as a way of surviving, and should not be dismissed as mere acquiescence to power.

The first element of women's agency we should consider, at Muhammed's and elsewhere, surrounds women's decisions to enter the labour force in the first place. I consider this systematically in my chapter on the relationship between work and family.

The second element of agency, which has been mentioned already in this chapter, is the decision to leave one's job. This action is the main form of agency open to workers and staff at Muhammed's, since most have no other way of combating the abusive ways in which they are treated. I have already mentioned eight different people at Muhammed's who I was informed had left their jobs after abusive treatment, or interference in their personal lives. Some of these people I was told about during fieldwork, and others by acquaintances later on.

At the risk of generalising I can identify several aspects connected to employees leaving their jobs. For younger, inexperienced shop floor workers leaving is an exercise of agency. To begin with they cry, curse and talk back to their supervisors and managers. I observed how young women cry at the HR office, and curse and even argue with managers. They also visit the nurse's room to take a break. But ultimately many leave completely, either to take another, better job in a different garment factory, to set up a home-based garment business, and/or to marry or have children. So management's view that younger, unmarried workers are more committed is not necessarily true. They may be pushed to work harder while in post, but they may not stay long. There have also been departures by younger office staff, for instance the HR executive Ms T. In her interview Ms T explained the frustrations of her job, and the extent to which she lacked opportunities to do things her way. She felt, in other words, as if her agency was stifled:

> You know I think in this organisation I am the one who has been scolded to maximum. It may be that I do not get an opportunity to talk and to justify that I am not wrong… if I am given a task I always try to do it in the best possible manner but still get scolded. Me: So what do you think is the reason for that? T: Reason, maybe they might be thinking that I am too timid but I am not as timid as they think… I am very strong (Laughing) (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Younger male shop floor and office workers also leave, or plan to leave, disgruntled by abusive treatment from management, for instance the payroll executive Mr R. He said that he is shouted at even though he works till late during the week and even

during the week-end, and he intends to leave as soon as he gets a better opportunity elsewhere.

The most interesting departures, though, are by more senior managers who did not relish the managerial culture of Muhammed's, such as Mr Sri (Group technical manager), who apparently left the company after I had completed fieldwork. He also thought he had no chance of promotion. He was well liked by his subordinates, and known for not shouting at workers. Mr Sri listened to employees, was helpful and maintained harmonious relations with the employees – according to what Ms Sri, a supervisor working under him told me in an informal chat. Ms San, the HR assistant in Mr Sri's department, was of the view that he helped her to develop her career. But he did not try to impose his style of management on other managers, suggesting his agency while employed at Muhammed's was relatively limited too. In fact, to protect the supportive environment he tried to create in his own department, he imitated the wiles of other managers by trying to make sure he employed only people in his department who would be loyal to him personally. In an informal chat, Mr Sri told me that he had hired Mr S as an executive to assist him, as he had known him for a long time. He further said, 'When you have people who are close to you and those who are trustworthy it is easy to work as they do not allow you to get into trouble' (Fieldnotes 14/01/15). He also hired a young woman, Ms San, as an HR assistant attached to his department, to deal with HR issues in that department. Ms San could keep an eye on changes taking place within the organisation and tell Mr Sri about them:

> So if HR communicates something related to our department my HR assistant verifies it with the HR department and we ensure that we get the correct notice (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr Sri's comments suggest a rivalry between managers, with each looking out for their own backs,that did not emerge elsewhere.

However, not everyone leaves or wants to leave their jobs. In particular, the older, experienced women machinists seem to have carved out a place for themselves where they could act much as they liked. One experienced machinist told me that she did not accept any offers of promotion so that she is not obliged to do what the managers want. I observed how she maintains her dignity by rejecting promotion; hence she is able to argue with managers but still continue in the job. Another good example of the agency

of an experienced, woman staff member is the current counsellor, Ms K, who one time tried to form a trade union. Management offered her the position of counsellor to divert her interest (irrespective of the fact that she has no formal qualification). So although she was unsuccessful in starting a union, she got something for herself out of the attempt to set up a trade union. Similarly management has retained the sole women manager, Ms Nav (Merchandising manager), who successfully expressed her agency by negotiating with the management over her working hours.

> The management has given me permission to take Saturday off because I have to travel to my husband's estate in a remote area with my little daughter. But I ensure that I complete my work within the week (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The limited kinds of individual agency I have discussed above, are located in the context of a limited number of opportunities for employees to exercise collective agency, for instance through a trade union. As I discussed in the chapter on country context, joining a union is a legal right in Sri Lanka but the state and the Board of Investment discourage the formation or persistence of unions in garment factories (Biyanwila, 2011).Like many other garment factories, Muhammed's Clothing has only a Joint Consultative Committee recommended by the Board of Investment in Sri Lanka (Abeywardene et al., 1994, Biyanwila, 2011), which employees call the 'welfare committee'.

There was, however, a union in the past. Ms Tha, the training line instructress, recalls the presence of a union a long time ago.

> Yes, yes there was a union formed by the children long ago, I mean around 1995. It was there till I left …and when I re-joined there was no union. I do not know how it went missing. Now there is no union but only a welfare [the welfare society is the interface between the management and workers as there is no labour union].

She also reminds me that in the past employees rebelled against management due to a delay in the payment of their salaries.

> Me: Do you have an experience of a strike? T: Yes, long time ago. Once there was a strike. 10th of the month was a Monday and children came to know that the company was not paying the salary. So the children went for lunch but did not return to work. Then the company paid salaries late in the evening and we came to work the next day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr Sri was critical of the suppression of the union, which again distinguishes him from other managers.

> I heard that there was a union in the company at one point in time but the management has ruined it and they have buried it, even there were strikes (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Exactly why the union disappeared is not clear, but it seems the company defeated it through an appeal to the Labour Commissioner. Mr A, the MD and a member of the owner's family, says there were many strikes in the past, for what he says was no good reason.

> A: I think the last strike here was in 1997, we also didn't know the reason, I think that was politically motivated, if I am not mistaken. Me: You mean outside party politics [were involved]? A: Yeah, so then, just for things that had no relevance they had a strike. They wanted to cripple the system (Muslim/Married).

He says that the employees had 13 demands, which the MD refused, and the issue was taken to the Labour Commissioner. And the MD informed the Labour Commissioner that he was going to close down the factory if employees did not return to work. According to the MD the Labour Commissioner ruled on his side that the demands were unfair, and the employees gave up the strike and returned to work the next day, recognising that the union was not working in their interest:

> Mr A: It was politically motivated, not JVP[33] union, this is Sri Lanka Freedom Party union. So they want a huge membership drive and we explained it to our workers and asked them to fight with us without bringing in outsiders, so they have got the message loud and clear, now luckily everything is solved (Muslim/Married).

The MD told me that he had won the argument by producing some documents which assured the commissioner that the company was doing its best to ensure employee well-being. Whether this is true is difficult to know. The ability of the company to provide records to prove that it did very well by the employees is questionable because decisions are made arbitrarily and record keeping is poor. However, it is possible that being a member of the elite the MD could approach the commissioner informally. I discussed in the chapter on country context how the elite manipulate the bureaucratic system (Amarasuriya, 2015) and the prevalence and visibility of nepotism and corruption within Sri Lanka (Hughes, 2014).

[33]Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a smaller Marxist-nationalist political party representing the oppressed lower class young Sinhalese male majority, I discussed JVP in the chapter on country context.

The above story is a good example of despotic management practices by the company because it illustrates the MD's unwillingness to negotiate. In fact at one point in the dispute the MD decided to close the factory, rather than considering at least a few of the 13 demands presented by the employees.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined a large number of incidents and comments from interviews and informal conversations, as well as from my own observations, that suggest that the management of Muhammed's is quite despotic in the way it treats workers, and also its junior office staff. First, the most senior managers are all family members of the founder of the company (as listed in chapter on organisational context), and they take all the big decisions in the company. Related to this the company seems to be quite arbitrary in its promotion strategies, and they do not promote people from outside the family into their ranks. Secondly, they also act towards workers and other managers with total indifference to their feelings, and seemingly without any care as to whether workers' feelings or dignity matter at all. In addition, the so-called women's empowerment program seems to be intended to inculcate gender and class subordination.

As a part of the global supply chain the company faces pressure to meet targets and avoid heavy airfreight costs if a shipment gets delayed. In consequence, managers and supervisors who are mostly men shout at the employees, who are mostly women, and heated arguments, swearing, crying, going to the sick room and even leaving are common on the factory floor. Most of the employees are dissatisfied with the disrespectful behaviour of the managers. In contrast a handful of managers and supervisors with more experience regarding the production process, take a different approach and say they try to manage employees in a respectful manner. But even they, following the industry norm, call factory floor women 'children'. Buddhist employees face discrimination because the company makes it compulsory to work on *poya* days, a religiously important day for the Sinhala, despite these being legal holidays in Sri Lanka. There are indications of sexual harassment, and while management say they attempt to ensure that they try to minimize such incidents (and dismiss people if found guilty), I observed many incidents that comprise or border on harassment, which hardly anyone questions. And newcomers, especially women, are subject to bullying.

Plus the evidence I obtained suggests that managers can interfere in the personal lives of employees in terms of behaviour, dress and even sexuality.

Labour agency takes different forms and variations are found depending on the age and experience of the employees. Most of the young inexperienced women cry, swear and leave, but experienced and older women argue with managers and even refuse promotions to try to retain their dignity and remain in their jobs. The company had a trade union in the past but management dismantled it. The Joint Consultative Committee that now operates doesn't seem to provide employees with any real voice.

It seems that the company's despotic regime re-emphasises and reproduces the inequalities that are present in the wider society of Sri Lanka. The owners and senior managers, as members of the elite, can act with impunity towards members of other classes. Even the middle class or lower middle class HR staff ridicule the rural mores of the factory floor women. Every feature of factory life, including highly unequal earnings, informal interactions, and forms of address, and the use of space, furniture (and even the eating arrangements I discussed in considering organisational context) reproduce and legitimise the unequal status of people in the factory in relation to each other. As part of the global supply chain the company attempts to satisfy its buyers and at the same time maximize profits. It maintains only the minimum standard of working conditions and labour agency is handled in ways that does not disrupt the production process. In other words, the forms of control which govern factory relations, and which include attempts to control the personal lives of workers, and not just their output, play a particularly strong role in this inequality regime.

Chapter 6

The ‘Maternalistic’ Inequality Regime at Amma’s Fashions

Introduction

In the previous chapter I characterised the inequality regime at Muhammad’s Clothing as despotic, because of the arbitrary ways managers’ decisions are taken, in the absence of any means to hold them accountable due to a lack of records. All the managers are men, and the most senior managers are members of the owner’s own family. They are aggressively disrespectful and abusive to many of the employees. Nor do workers have any voicing mechanisms with which to make their dissatisfaction known.

In this chapter I will be looking at the companyAmma’s Fashions, where we find a very different inequality regime in place. I call this a ‘maternalistic’ inequality regime not only because the owner and chairwoman, Ms R, is a woman, but also because she seems to have modelled her authority on the respected position of the mother figure in Sri Lankan life. One of her two daughters, Ms M, is the Managing Director, and she too builds on her image of femininity rather than seeking to construct a more gender-neutral one. Although these are the only two women in the company above supervisory level, their personal inclinations and management styles dominate organisational processes and practices. These processes and practices, and the loyalty and respect that they successfully garner from the workers, have the effect of reproducing class inequality, but these women employees also moderate, to some degree, the scale of gender inequality we observed at Muhammed’s Clothing. It is because of the maternalistic power relations at this company that I gave it the pseudonym ‘Amma’s Fashions’, *Amma* meaning mother in Sinhala.

Before considering the organisational processes and practices of Amma's Fashions, I will further explain what I mean by ‘maternalism’ including how it relates to power relations. The concept of maternalistic power has been mooted by several scholars studying the relations between domestic workers and their employers, including Anderson’s (2000) study of migrant women employed as domestic workers in five European cities; Arnado’s (2003) study of the Philippine experience of mistress-maid

relations; and King's (2007) study of domestic service in post-apartheid in South Africa. According to this literature, the power relations of much paid domestic work is characterised by a maternalistic relationship in which the employer adopts an ostensibly nurturing, caring role (Rollins, 1985 cited in Moras, 2013) toward the domestic worker. The concept of 'maternalism' captures a continuum of support and control in the feminised relationship between mistress and maid (Arnado, 2003). Despite the apparent kindness of the mistress, maternalism, like other power relations, is an asymmetrical relationship in which only the madam has the power to give and nurture; this reproduces status inequality between the employer and their household worker (Anderson, 2000). King (2007) suggests the relationship between mistress and worker might better be termed 'pseudo-maternalism', because the worker is not a child, nor can she grow up and out of the relationship. Thus, although the power of the madam resembles the authority of, and care provided by, mothers, in actuality it masks the power of the employer, reproduces the dependence of the worker, and restricts the worker's autonomy. However, in many contexts maternalism is the only power available to women in the home, so the presence of a maternalistic relationship reflects the constraints facing women employers in the ways that they can control their workers.

This struck me as similar to the kind of power the chairwoman at Amma's Fashions exercises, despite the difference in context. At Amma's Fashions the employer-employee relationship is located within the formal organisational setting of a garment factory, rather than the domestic sphere. But there are ways in which Sri Lankan factory life affords scope for maternalistic power to flourish. Firstly, in Sri Lanka doing people favours is highly valued; it is seen as a particular virtue by Buddhists and calls for gratitude in return. This is called *Calaguna Selakeema* in Sinhala or being grateful. Secondly, the usual practice of calling shop floor workers 'children' creates an appropriate atmosphere for the kind of maternalistic power the chairwoman exercises. Similar to employers in paid domestic work, at Amma's the chairwoman's 'kindness' masks power relations between the employer and employee, stifling any potential challenge to class and status hierarchy. In contrast, this form of relationship deepens the dependence of the employee on the employer in many ways, including the employee's dependence on the employer during times of family crises or exceptional financial need.

So long as the chairwoman is kind to her inferiors by doing favours for them, she maintains a superior position, and constructs the employment relations as one of beneficence rather than exploitation. In return, most of the employees, including the managers, feel indebted to her personally, and this leads them to express the devotion of a loyal workforce. Ms R does not set out to control her employees through deception, and as far as I could tell she genuinely sees looking after her employees, especially the young women, as part of her role as a responsible woman manager. However, the chairwoman indicated several times that she knows that acquiring workers' affection and loyalty is an effective management strategy. Her kindness is incorporated into the relative comfort of the physical facilities, welfare measures, salaries, and support for women shop floor workers in resolving family issues that might otherwise impede their employment outside the family.

Amma's Fashions is in a strong position to afford the generosity and kindness on which Ms R takes pride. In the past few years it has expanded from approximately 4000 to 6000 employees. As explained in the chapter on organisational context the company produces high fashion goods for international buyers and as a result can afford to pay higher salaries and wages than my other two case study companies, and to provide more comfortable work conditions.

The first, but a very important component of the maternalistic ethos of management, I must note, is its image. As mentioned in Chapter x, a large photograph of Ms R, wearing a saree, hangs on the wall of the reception area in the head office. About 3 foot by 4 foot, its caption says, in Sinhala: 'You are the mother who gave birth to the child Amma's Fashions: We respect you'[34]. From the moment one enters the head office, therefore, the company is linked to the motherhood, femininity and respectability of the chairwoman.

In the rest of the chapter I identify the other characteristics of factory management that have led me to characterise the factory regime as 'maternalistic'. I begin with hiring and promotion, where there are hints of the company's concern for individual workers' welfare. More dramatic are the ways interpersonal interactions and the welfare policy construct a compliant workforce. I then consider how production is managed.

[34]The translation in Sinhala is as follows: Amma's Fashions (Name of the company) bihikala (gave birth) mauni (mother) obata (to you) apage (our) pranamaya (respect).

Shouting is present though not as frequent and rude as at Muhammed's. Finally I consider how labour agency is expressed. I conclude the chapter by suggesting that in a maternalistic inequality regime the inferior-superior beneficent relationship reproduces class and status inequalities but gender inequality is moderated. Management seeks to ensure good working conditions and financial assistance, giving women support to continue in their jobs, for instance by recognising the gender-specific problems women face in their families and seeking to resolve them.

The Construction of the Labour Force

This section concentrates on how Amma's Fashions constructs its labour force, beginning with its hiring and promotional practices before moving on to the ways that a compliant workforce is obtained by promoting harmonious relations. This is a big difference from Muhammad's, where the top men from the family wield absolute power in managing employees, show a lack of respect to their employees, and normalise abusive interactions.

The construction of the labour force at Amma's needs to be seen in the context of a persistent labour shortage and high turnover – in line with the general trend of the industry as a whole. There are said to be two reasons for this. Firstly, I was told the local people whose main employment is agriculture are more or less self-sufficient through their access to food grains. Mr C, the factory manager, says this is why the factory has a labour shortage. He says that the local villagers have inherited property, so that each family has at least half an acre of paddy land. Thus they are able to grow food and to live a very basic life. Secondly, there are many other factories in the area employing women. Whenever women want they can easily find a job so they are not interested in staying in one job (Fieldnotes 16/05/15).

The chairwoman admits that the high turnover of labour is a reason for the amount of welfare the factory provides for its workers, and she is disappointed that turnover remains high.

> We do not know the reason [for high labour turnover]. So I told the HR manager in the head office that we have to find the reasons for labour turnover. He has not done exit interviews. With our knowledge we are giving so much of welfare to them. But still what is happening? Today I told him very strongly (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Yet as I will show, the company does much more for their workers than Muhammed's.

Hiring and Promotion

As in other garment factories employment criteria are highly gendered, and different selection criteria and prejudices apply to women and men as potential employees. In promotions, immediate superiors have the most influence in making decisions.

In hiring, various selection tools are used at different levels. I was told that interviews are held when selecting top-level personnel, but for intermediate and lower levels written tests and other tests for competencies, such as computer literacy and sewing ability, are used along with interviews. Educational qualifications and work experience are considered at all levels. Selection was therefore more careful and consistent than at Muhammed's

Top personnel commented that suitability, qualifications and experience were verified by a series of interviews. Mr Hem, a cluster GM, said that he was 'first interviewed by Mr T, the ED, and then by Ms R. They were interested in my experience and checked my certificates' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married). At the intermediate level, there is only one interview but also, depending on the job, employees face certain tests. Mr Osh, an HR executive, 'had an IQ test, paper and a hands-on test for IT. Apart from that, the HR manager interviewed me and inquired about my qualifications and experience' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married). Even at the lowest level competency had to be demonstrated. Ms Sri, a cleaner, was interviewed by Sir B, and then she was 'taken to the garden and he gave me a broom and asked me to sweep a certain area. Then he gave me a date to come and assume duties' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Besides applicants' suitability for the job, interviews may also deal with personal matters. The employees I talked to saw this as part of management's attempt to provide help where they could. For instance, Mr Osh, an HR executive, was offered help to find a boarding place.

> I am from M'gama and it is far away. HR manager asked whether to arrange a place for me to stay. I told him that I have some relatives close by and I can stay with them (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Nor were conversations about their personal life at the interview seen as intrusive or as unwarranted interference, perhaps because they are amalgamated to the chairwoman's maternal role. For instance, Ms Rosh, secretary to the chairwoman, told me in her interview that the chairwoman enquired about whether Ms Rosh had

children, and said that she could help Ms Rosh obtain medical advice about fertility if she wanted. Ms Rosh not having children and said that she could help Ms Rosh obtain medical advice if she wanted. Mr Osh is appreciative of the fact that his personal needs are seen as important by management, and Ms Rosh explicitly sees the chairwoman acting like a mother. These examples show management's concern for employees' welfare, but of course also ensure that potential employees will take up the job offer.

At the same time, when it comes to hiring new shop floor workers, gender inequality is perpetuated, since the company sees some jobs as appropriate only for men, and others as appropriate only for women. According to Ms Shri there are only seven or eight men out of 60 workers on a machinists' line ('children'). Although the company sees discrimination against men as being in women's interests, for instance as machinists, it treats men and women as categories rather than more or less well-qualified individuals. Ms Ire, the HR executive of the factory, commented that

> As a percentage we recruit fewer men. Me: Is it done intentionally? I: Yes. There are certain jobs for which we need men such as cutting and ironing. So for those we hire men. For production we hire only a few and we have a lot of women. We think about the safety and security of women and we hire [only] a few men in the the factory (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The promotion process is handled carefully. In terms of criteria, according to the chairwoman, priorities for employees to obtain promotion are 'performance and also their integrity and their faithfulness to the company' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed). Because the company is expanding, there is room for promotion for both managers and workers. For instance, Mr Hem (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married) was promoted from a cluster manager to a General Manager (GM).

Shop floor promotion lies mainly in the hands of the immediate supervisor's recommendation. For instance, Mr Chathu, a machinist, says that 'Sir C, the factory manager, told me that now I can hope for a promotion (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married). Most importantly, supervisors encourage both women and men to improve their skills with a view to promotion, and offer them training. For instance, Ms Shri, now a supervisor, says that

> Mr T was my supervisor and I was working as a machinist under him for a while and he developed me well and ultimately I became a supervisor (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Promoting Harmonious Relations at Work

Although workers appreciate opportunities for promotion, at Amma's there are many other ways in which management seeks to construct a harmonious work environment in which workers remain loyal. In particular, the chairwoman and the MD are seen as kind to workers, and as taking responsibility for employees' well-being. Employees see familial concerns for workers as an appropriate way for women managers in particular to behave.

There are at least three components to fostering harmonious relations at Amma's. First, salaries and wages are higher than in many other factories. As seen in Chapter four, Amma's pays the highest salaries (and other incentives) compared to the other two case study organisations of this study; this might be partly because the company produces fashion garments using delicate materials for international buyers to demanding standards, so workers' skill levels might be higher than at the other factories and command higher wages in the labour market. But Amma's Fashions also provides more comfortable physical facilities, better on-site food, and healthcare, ensuring that employee well-being is treated more generously than at the other two factories.

Second, the manner in which senior managers interact with staff and managers. The chairwoman, her daughter, Ms M, the Managing Director and her son-in-law, Mr T. the Executive Director, chat and joke with employees, showing that they know them individually, and that they are aware of any problems that their employees might be having inside and outside the workplace. For instance, as the chairwoman walks around the offices at headquarters and the factory she stops to chat to people and talks to them about any difficulties at work, their health and even about their family members. She smiles at everyone she meets. Ms M and Mr T also walk around with a smile and no one seems to be scared in their presence. To give an example, I observed the MD joking with some elderly male employees. Once, when I was observing the daily routine of the receptionist in the head office, I saw Mr K, an elderly man of about 55, a quality controller, coming down the stairway at the same time as the MD was walking up. Seeing the MD coming up, Mr K stopped where he was and the MD joked with him, saying that 'though I am fat, you are thin, so we can go up and down at the

same time'. Her words and manner implied a degree of equality and informality in her quip, which told him that he need not wait on her.

I took the opportunity to talk to Mr K immediately afterwards, and he said how much he and the other employees appreciated their employers' politeness and concern. He told me that these owners are very 'humble' and have 'good relations' with their employees. In fact, he said, when he had been seriously ill the chairwoman and the MD took good care of him by sending him to good, specialist doctors. They also helped his family by paying his salary until he returned to work, and gave his family dry rations such as rice, lentils and dry fish every month, free of charge. He also said that even now the chairwoman inquiries about his health. He says that he is extremely grateful to the top women in the company, and would never consider leaving the company until he retires (Fieldnotes 10/03/2015). The owners pride themselves on their approachability, and do not seek to maintain social distance from employees. In consequence employees show respect and gratitude.

Similarly, when the chairwoman visits the other factories, according to Ms Shri, a supervisor at the remote factory where I conducted interviews with shop floor workers, she and the other employees 'feel happy'.

> Madam is visiting these factories. She does not only visit the management but she comes to each and every line and speaks with the supervisors and also with a few children. She is very friendly. When she is around we also feel happy. Even the children say that they also feel happy (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In other words Ms R's 'children' feel happy in her presence because she talks to them and pays attention to their needs. This is understood within the company as a form of feminine power, which she models on the mother-child relation.

Third, Amma's Fashions, and Ms R in particular, pays careful attention to the individual needs of staff and workers. This parallels Sri Lankan cultural and the Buddhist religious value called *Calaguna Selakeema*, which legitimises the dependency of workers on the kindness of the management. Gamage and Wickramasinghe (2012) highlight the fact that Sri Lankans see paying debts of gratitude as a moral obligation.

While I was at head office and the factory I was told many times of Ms R's generosity. Help with healthcare costs and medical advice was particularly important to

employees. This is because in Sri Lanka, although healthcare at public hospitals is free of charge, there is no health insurance system and patients have to pay for any laboratory tests that can only be conducted in private hospitals, and for prescribed medicines from outside pharmacies. The chairwoman once told me that she made an announcement to all the employees that if they or their family members were sick to inform her. She gave me a file with letters from employees seeking help to pay for treatment. According to the chairwoman, either the mother or the daughter uses their personal contacts to consult suitable doctors and some of the payments are made by the company.

> Me and my daughter, we direct them to respective doctors, operations and all we look into. Today in the evening I must call my cousin. He is a professor in the Peradeniya hospital. Because a girl from Ad'gama factory has taken treatments from the cardiology there. I want to direct her to a proper specialist. Then again in Kurunegala factory also I need to contact my niece's husband, to find suitable doctors because there is woman with epilepsy and her child has some muscle disorder. To a certain extent the company pay for their medical treatments (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

The chairwoman and the MD make use of their family networks as members of the professional elite. In Sri Lanka when a working class person is able to make individual contact with a doctor, through a recommendation of a member of the elite, getting proper care in a public hospital is much easier. But while the workers appreciate the company's help in dealing with their sicknesses, at the same time it enhances their dependence on the employer and legitimates it because this informal system of help does not give employees direct access to care, so they remain dependent on the owners' interceding for them. Thus, the maternalistic regime may constrain employees from developing a sense of their right to healthcare or other benefits.

Attentive management also helps employees when they face other kinds of crisis. For example, a severe flood a few years ago affected the area surrounding the factory I studied. The chairwoman instructed the managers to help the many employees who were affected, and depending on the damage they were given a certain amount of money, without a bond to repay. Everyone was also given dry rations for one week. Among the affected families there was a young woman who was living with her family in a mud hut that was completely washed away. Ms I, the HR Executive of the factory, told me that the company spent Rs 500,000 building her a three bedroom house with

a spacious living room, bathroom and a kitchen. When the chairwoman came from Colombo to attend the house-warming ceremony, she asked Mr B, the factory HR manager, to buy dry rations and cleaning things, such as brooms, because it is the Sinhalese tradition to bring these things to a warming ceremony (Fieldnotes 08/05/15).

As can be seen in this account, Ms R's relations to her employees creates an atmosphere which encourages employees to seek help from the managers when they need it, and encourages managers to have regard for crises in workers' families. According to Ms Sri, a cleaner:

> If we have a problem we mostly talk to Sir B (HR Manager). Then he discusses with the HR and gives us a solution. For example, even if we are in need of money for an emergency we can get it from the company. So we pay later. All are helpful and we work in unity (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

When it comes to help with family matters, the immediate staff of the chairwoman and her daughter, the MD, receive particular attention, as they work together every day, and the top management come to know about family emergencies. For instance, Ms Rosh, the secretary to the chairwoman, feels she has received special help because of the personal relationship she has with Ms R:

> I have obtained personal loans from the company. They are interest-free loans. Me: Can anyone get such a loan? R: I do not think they are given to everyone. They may have considered my service. Because of my sicknesses I have been given permission to come to work late but I complete my duties before I leave. So I have a homely feeling at the workplace. I can discuss anything with madam (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, Ms S (Planning Assistant) and Mr Ru (Senior Accounts Manager Merchandising), who work closely with the MD, Ms R's daughter, commented on how the MD treats them and how grateful they are to her. Ms S (Planning Assistant) told me that she directly reports to Mr T, the Executive Director (MD's husband), but most of the time she works with the MD. She says that

> Ms M (the MD) is like 'a mother to me' and she helped me in different ways when I was putting up the house and gave me a good sum of money to be spent for the house- warming ceremony. The MD signed as the witness even at my wedding (Fieldnotes 31/03/15).

The Chairwoman and her daughter are particularly accessible to the employees who work with them every day, and this also facilitates their power. Seemingly in consequence these employees become more obliged and loyal than other employees.

In return for the kindness of Ms R and her family, employees show them particular respect. For example, whenever the chairwoman enters an office those who are seated get up and remain standing till she leaves. The chairwoman asks them to sit but they remain standing (Fieldnotes 07/04/15). Similarly, I observed other occasions in which her family is shown respect by employees. One was a meeting conducted by Mr M, the General Manager (GM) of Merchandising. While the meeting was in progress Mr T (the ED, and the husband of the MD) came into the meeting room and had a brief conversation with Mr M. As soon as Mr T entered the room all the employees, except for Mr M, stood for a while and then sat again (Fieldnotes 18/03/15). This is an indication that practices that demonstrate respect are reproduced rather than attenuated in a maternalistic regime. The same occurs on the factory floor where everyone stands up whenever a manager enters a department, and sit down again only after the manager sits (Fieldnotes 06/05/15).

Respect to Ms R and her family is shown not just by the employees, but also by their families. For instance, Ms I, told me that when the chairwoman comes to the factory annually for the New Year celebrations the whole family of the employee whose house was built after flooding come to demonstrate their gratitude to Ms R. These family members bow[35] to the chairwoman before they leave the factory (Fieldnotes 08/05/15). The employees voluntarily and genuinely show their gratitude to the management,but at the same time it dramatises the chairwoman's relative power as well as her kindness, and their humility in the face of it.

The office personnel who work with Ms R or her daughter also express gratitude. Even Mr Ru, the senior accounts manager of merchandising, says that the MD is not only considerate to him but was concerned about his wife when she was pregnant.

> I work very closely with the MD. At one time I had a high cholesterol level, then the MD consulted a doctor and on the day I had the appointment she gave a call and reminded my boss to release me early to go to the doctor. Also when my wife was pregnant the MD brought something special for her to eat. And she asked about her condition weekly. So these thingsare more important than being paid a salary of a million. Thus it is difficult for us to leave this organisation. There is a strong bond (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

[35] Which isknown as 'Wandinawa' in Sinhala. The literal meaning is worshipping.

It is therefore in the mother's role, and not just as responsible employers, that Ms R and her daughter Ms M seek to ensure employee well-being. Of course, management understands that when women are at work their family matters affect their jobs and the company willingly helps them in resolving issues, especially sicknesses of family members, partly for that reason. This enables the company to retain employees, and to maintain a loyal workforce. But the welfare policy deals with employees' problems on a one- to- one basis, rather than promoting rights to employees as a group, or, for instance, instituting more impersonal forms of insurance against illness or other crises. The chairwoman discusses work-related and personal issues with even shop floor-level employees. But of course this kind of power has other implications, since constructing herself as a mother reinforces the common Sri Lankan construction of women garment workers as children, which I discussed in the chapter on organisational context, and constructs them as dependent, also obscuring the owner of the factory's dependence on the labour of workers.

Promoting Feminine Respectability and Responsible Behaviour

I suggest that the ways in which Mrs R engages in maternalism is also connected to her recognition of the social value of feminine respectability. In Muhammad's, managers also seek to instil this value, but formally, through the 'Ladder' training program for factory floor women. Aimed at promoting respectability it actually reproduces women's subordination as prescribed by patriarchal norms, as it conveys the message that women should identify the behaviours appreciated by men and change their behaviour accordingly to avoid unwanted attention – and that women should be tolerant of men's behaviour without complaining. We recall how one of the women managers was shouted at abusively because of what she was wearing. In contrast, at Amma's Mrs R seems to see maintaining feminine respectability as a way of increasing women's social status for both managers and workers, i.e. as being in their own interests. The chairwoman's attitude here reflects her upper middle class[36]family background, but she also views it as her responsibility to deal with the

[36] I discussed in the chapter on country context that the Sri Lankan class structure is complicated and mainly consists of the elite, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class and the poor. Middle class is much more complicated and consists of local middle class and global middle class (Bamunusinghe, 2014).

poor reputation of women factory workers. In this she has not been completely successful.

Dress is an important facet of respectability, and Ms R emphasises this. She wears a saree for formal occasions and comments on proper attire for young women when addressing employees, and encourages them to see her as a role model. The office staff are encouraged to dress in a specified manner, although Ms R's daughter, who often wears casual jeans, seems to be exempt. Except for pregnant women who wear maternity frocks, the office workers in the factory HR department wear sarees on weekdays, although on Saturdays they dress down in jeans and tops or frocks. I inquired from the office workers whether the company made it compulsory to wear saree. Their reply was that they are free to wear any attire, but that they agreed to wear sarees; they consider it is as respectable attire, and HR personnel, who work closely with the employees of the factory floor, think that it is good that they become role models to the lower level employees (Fieldnotes 06/05/2015). Perhaps they also mean to imply that women working in the HR department, mostly from the lower middle class, should follow the chairwoman's example, and in turn be role models for the shop floor women workers.

Ms R also promotes modest expenditure on dress, rather than using money for showy/expensive clothes. Ms Rosh, the secretary to the chairwoman, told me that before she joined Amma's she had been spending too much on clothes. Seeing that the chairwoman, who is much wealthier than she is, did not spend as much on clothes Ms Rosh discussed this with Ms R. The secretary says that the chairwoman told her that what is important is to dress neatly and tidily. She says that Ms R suggested that every month she save half the money she used to spend for clothes, and now she has saved a good sum of money (Fieldnotes 17/03/15).

For Ms Rosh the chairwoman's advice is part and parcel of her self-presentation, which is seen as a good model to follow. For instance the chairwoman is very punctual:

> Madam works on time. She plans well. We get delayed when getting ready and so on. So we have to learn these skills from her and add those to our lives (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Ms Shri, a supervisor in the factory, also thinks that the other women at Amma's have a lot to learn from the chairwoman.

> Madam has developed the business with a great difficulty. Why can't we do things then? I always think that we have lot of lessons to learn from such a woman (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Ms R also sees young women as needing to protect their sexual purity till marriage, although she is sometimes moralistic about this, she also sees this as a way of maintaining social status:

> When I address the girls I tell them not to get caught to these men and to unnecessary things. Boys are also listening, public address. I tell them your purity how important it is, protect it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Maintaining purity upholds the gender order rather than undermining it, but, at the same time, provides women with greater opportunities and better working conditions than they might experience in other garment factories.

However, Ms R is unable in the end to protect her women employees from the wider negative reputation placed on young women working in garment factories. I was told of three different women who had left the factory because their husbands, believing factory women to have a bad reputation, made it a condition of marriage. Women left for various gender-specific reasons, including childbirth and joining their husband who lived in another locale.

Sexual Harassment and Personal Lives

Ms R is also determined that no sexual harassment takes place in her factory. She sees providing a safe, secure and harassment-free working environment as part of being a responsible woman employer. The rest of the managers are expected to ensure this too, and there are constant checks by top management on the behaviour of other managers. For example, the chairwoman is extremely conscious that a woman's dignity should be valued. She told me:

> Sexual harassments of course nothing. Me: Why is that? M: If it is sexual harassment I would kill the man (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Ms Rosh, the secretary to the chairwomen, says that, following the top management's example, managers behave well.

> In the evening men go out to parties and have liquor and come back. But they have good discipline. I have not heardof a woman being harassed. I think everyone knows that if something happens to a woman madam takes firm action. That is the culture and the way they manage. When the top people are good such issues will not happen (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Ms Shri, a supervisor, compares the behaviour of managers at Amma's with the managers of other factories:

> In other factories even management has undue relationships. But our management has nothing like that. It may be due to madam [Chairwoman]. Though she is in Wattha [Head office] she is handling things properly. That example might be working. Even men working as supervisors are good (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, Ms Ire, the HR executive of the factory, says that the company has ensured that women work in a safe and secure environment without sexual harassment and bullying.

> We can do the job safely within the organisation. The environment is a secure one. Men cannot yell at women or threaten women. Not even to embarrass women within the organisation. Top management takes every step to ensure that (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The absence of sexual harassment in Amma's Fashions seems to reflect its ownership by a woman, Ms R and her insistence on appropriate and non-abusive behaviour. But she does not really take steps to empower workers to protect themselves and their interests.

However, Ms R does recognise that the company has no right to interfere in employees' consensual relationships. She told me:

> But some go willingly. Even affairs among married ones. I hear these things and I get scared thinking that the real husband will kill both of them. But I cannot intervene as these are personal matters of adults (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Although management does not intervene with matters relating to the sexuality of employees, when employees face problems as women workers they can seek help from the organisation. For example, Ms N, an accounts assistant, told me that she has been working for the organisation for 23 years. At one point there was no one to look after her son after school so her husband did not want her to continue to go out to work. At first Ms N gave her resignation, but instead of accepting it the chairwoman had a long discussion with her, and arranged new working hours, so that she could leave at 1.30 p.m. every day to go home and look after her son. She worked those hours until her son grew up, when she returned to normal working hours. Ms N told me that she is living happily today because the chairwoman helped her to continue with her job and she is extremely grateful for that (Fieldnotes 24/03/15).

These are examples that show how the company supports employees in their personal lives on request, like a mother guiding her children, which helps employees to continue to keep their jobs. This attempts to deal with gender inequalities, because the chairwoman makes it possible for women to combine parenting with work, rather than women having to give up working in the factory. It also recognises that unjustified inequality does not challenge the gender order, which assigns women the responsibility for childcare. That said, it does moderate gender inequality in so far as it enables women to stay at work.

Managing Production

The management of production on the shop floor at Amma's also follows the maternalistic regime, with top-level management taking more interest than at Muhammed's. As HR executive Mr Osh says,

> In other factories they pay attention only to work. But here more attention is paid to children. So when compared to other garment factories turnover lies at a satisfactory level. But still it affects the production. Me: What is the reason for that? O: I think the top level has close contact with the lower level (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The level of labour turnover, Mr Osh believes, is unfortunate, but not as bad as it could be. There are generous incentives and less shouting than elsewhere, with staff trying to address issues that prevent workers from meeting targets, such as inadequate instructions for new designs or the need to change needles for different fabrics, or weak attendance.

Most importantly, as Mr Osh says, top level management is in touch with workers at all levels, and looks out for their welfare. Their maternalistic concern for women's welfare gives the shop floor a different feel than at Muhammed's. For instance, pregnant women are given extra support after their seventh month, for instance they are free to rest in the sick room when they want. If an employee is admitted to hospital the counsellor or another HR personnel visits her/him and provides help if required, for instance help with the bills or free dry rations. Employees do not need to pay the company back when they are given things in an emergency (Fieldnotes 14/05/15). However, except for pregnancy, cases are always decided on an individual basis, and workers perceive themselves as indebted to the managers rather than as having rights to paid leave or financial assistance when it is needed.

Target Setting and Shouting

As part of the global supply chain, Amma's Fashions faces the pressure of meeting deadlines set by the firms which have ordered garments, and incur the high costs of airfreights if a shipment gets delayed. However, since their high-fashion garments are made using expensive and delicate fabrics mistakes have to be avoided, and management take this into account when setting targets. Ms R says that with her knowledge and experience of sewing fashion garments, she knows the difficulties involved in completing complicated patterns. Her expectations about what work can be completed in a set amount of time means she and others need not shout at the workers to meet unrealistic targets, as managers at Muhammed's do. In fact, according to Ms R, orders are only accepted if the company is sure they can supply them on time, rather than obtaining huge orders aiming for profit at any cost (Fieldnotes 17/03/15).

Financial incentives play a big role in motivating workers to meet targets, with incentives both for individuals and groups (i.e. each line), whereas Muhammed's pays only group bonuses. According to Ms Shri, a supervisor, employees earn well if they achieve targets.

> We make them aware about it [the incentive system] and if they work well then we can go for targets, and at the end of the month they also can earn a good amount. If one can achieve an average of 60% then she/he can get an incentive. If the average in her/his line is 55% then everyone in the line gets that. So there are two incentives. Thus one can earn about Rs. 8000-9000 a month in addition to their salaries. And the company make payments on time (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

However, in talking about their jobs workers give more importance to their moral obligation to the company than financial considerations, showing how far they have imbibed and accepted the maternalistic regime, because they respond to what they understand as a moral management ethos. According to Ms Nan, a machinist, her 'duty'[37] is to complete the given target.

> Targets are for an hour. There is a target for a line. Say for example if 500 pieces of garments should be the output for a day then I might get a target of 50 pieces. So I have to sew it. It is my duty (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

[37] The Sinhala word 'Rajakariya'which I translated as'duty'indicates that one does a job not only for the salary but to pay gratitude to the employer for providing employment.

Such workers are loyal and they see doing their best as an obligation to the company. Supervisors like Nr Nuw also see doing their jobs as a moral obligation:

> We have targets for each hour. My duty is to make children work in the way they achieve the set target (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

None the less, meeting targets cannot be as simple as this, because although hourly targets are set based on the complexity of designs and what delicate materials are used, the work is still very high pressure. The counsellor, Ms M, says that there is pressure at all levels of the organisation to complete targets on time, and this pressure is passed from top to bottom, with the most vulnerable being the workers on the factory floor. For instance, on a day I was present on the shop floor I heard a man (a production executive) in a loud voice tell a young woman, the line leader,[38] that the operators in her line had not met targets, and if this continued everything would be delayed. He told her she must get the work done faster. Then, with a pale face, she walked quickly along her line and in an angry tone told the women machinists, 'You all do not work properly and I am the one who is getting the blame. Why don't you think a bit and work faster!' (Fieldnotes 28/05/15).

There is also shouting. According to Ms Sri, a supervisor, she sometimes shouts at employees but ensures that she also addresses whatever problem is holding them up.

> When I want to get the work done from a child I shout a bit. But I do not neglect that child. If a stock is accumulated at a child or if the child tends to have damages in the product I do not leave the child alone. I break up the stock and give some of it to others and I create an easy working environment for the child. Even if I shout it happens only once in a while. Children know that I shout at them to get the work done. So they give their best support to me (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, Mr Nuw, a supervisor also shouts, but he says that he ensures that the workday ends on a good note.

> Sometimes we have to shout at children. But in a little time we go and talk to them nicely. Anyway in the evening they go home in a happy mood (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

[38] A line leader is an experienced person below the level of the supervisor and in the absence of a supervisor she/he steps into the role of the supervisor, but she does not stitch. The line leader attends to the needs of all the machinists and, for example, if the production is not moving from one machinists to another the line leader quickly attends to it and clears the block.

I certainly heard less shouting at Amma's than at Muhammed's, and Ms Nan, a machinist, favourably compared the amount of shouting at Amma's to factories in FTZ's with,

> There is no shouting here. In the Katunayake FTZ there is a lot of shouting. It is 100% better in this factory (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

At Amma's, senior management seem to be aware that pressure can lead to shouting and even abuse and so do their best to keep the pressure under control. According to the cluster GM, Mr Hem, the top level tries to absorb most of the pressure.

> The issue is about shouting but we have reduced it. We at the top level get the pressure and try to minimize the pressure given to the lower levels. So the shouting too is reduced (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

According to Mr Ru, Accounts Manager of Merchandising, one supervisor was dismissed for excessive shouting, 'About two years back a supervisor was dismissed for shouting at a child in a bad way' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married). There is a hint here that the machinists need protection, not as workers, but because they are only 'children'.

The maternalism of the top level is expressed especially through the HR appointment of a qualified counsellor to deal with workers' problems, especially those of women workers, and to try to limit the absenteeism that results from them. Ms Madu is not afraid to assert herself in the face of objections from male managers or, if it is a household issue, the women's husbands. An example, from the day I spent in the sick room was how the counsellor dealt with the illness of a woman machinist who had come to the nurse with breathing difficulties. The supervisor of the sick woman, a man, came to the sick room several times to ask the woman to get back to work, as her absence was holding up the line. The nurse told him that she could not return to work, but the man argued with her. When he left the nurse telephoned the counsellor and explained the situation. Then the counsellor came to the sick room, spoke to the woman and immediately called the supervisor to tell him that the woman could not return to work that day. The counsellor's facial expression and the words she used over the phone made it obvious that the supervisor did not agree without a fight. Ultimately the counsellor told the woman that she should rest and then go home, and that she should take a day's leave the next day if she was still not feeling well. The counsellor's decision was ultimately accepted by the male supervisor, albeit

grudgingly. Here we see an instance of the accountability of production managers that was not present at Muhammed's.

Watching the counsellor at work I realised that many of the women's problems are due to caring for their families, and/or their husbands asserting their perceived rights to manage the household. The counsellor realises this, and uses her authority to try to help women stay in work. For instance, one day when I was in the factory the counsellor spoke to an elderly woman machinist who was recovering from illness, and whose husband had to undergo open-heart surgery. The machinist said that her son obtained 'a little job' only recently so she is the sole breadwinner. None the less, she thought she will need to quit her job to care for her husband after his operation. But the counsellor suggested other arrangements; Ms Madu suggested that the machinist need not quit her job, and instead said that she will arrange some leave and financial support when the husband is admitted to hospital (Fieldnotes 06/05/2015).

The ways the counsellor deals with men in the workers' families was very apparent when I accompanied her on the 'absent visits' she makes – as were the domestic caring responsibilities that prevent women from getting to work. If an employee has been absent for a few days and cannot be contacted by telephone the counsellor visits them at home. We visited two women machinists who had been absent for a few days. One woman had been absent because she was sick, but she was not willing to go to the hospital because her husband would be unable to take care of their two schoolchildren if she were admitted. The husband is a mystic with no regular income, so the woman is the sole breadwinner. The other machinists told us that her husband wanted her to leave work because she is sick but there seemed to be no alternative. The husband was not at home when we visited her but she said that if the counsellor spoke to her husband he might allow her to go back to work. The counsellor advised the woman to get treatment immediately, and she promised to get approval for medical leave in return. She also told the woman to call her when the husband is home, so that the counsellor can explain how the company can help them to resolve the issues the family is facing.

Then we visited another machinist who said that she could not go to work because there is no one else to look after her baby daughter, as her mother who usually looked after the baby while she was at work was ill in hospital. However, the employee was very worried because she is now the sole breadwinner, the husband gave up his job to

look after his sick mother. The counsellor told the worker that she could arrange a place at the day care centre near the factory, but the woman said her husband was not willing to leave the baby with anyone outside the family. The woman suggested that her husband might listen to the counsellor, and if she recommended the day care centre he might agree to send the baby there. The counsellor asked the woman to give her a call when the husband came home, so the counsellor could explain to the husband how the company can help the woman to continue to work (Fieldnotes 20/05/15). This happened in the last few days of my fieldwork, so I do not know exactly what happened, but when I left both were still employed at the factory on leave.

These examples illustrate that management at Amma's makes an effort to find out why workers are not coming to work, which suggests that they see existing workers as valuable and worth investing in. They are also aware that debilitating illnesses are common for workers and their families, and that workers may not be able to deal withsuch instances themselves. The financial insecurity of workers' families and absence of social insurance or legal rights to paid leave allow maternalistic power to flourish in this factory.

First of all managers are aware that family issues affect women's abilities to go out to work. They even recognise that when women employees are unable to come to work, it is often because their husbands are preventing them from doing so. The managers thus recognise men's relative power over women's work decisions. But managers also intercede directly on a woman's behalf. For instance, they use their relative status as managers to talk to the husband, and also provide practical alternatives to ensure that the woman can return to work. This implies that the maternalistic power recognises the prevalence of patriarchal control at home, and that the managers must address it if they are to enable women to resolve family-related issues and continue in their jobs. Similarly, there is a conflict between patriarchal power and maternalistic power as women say that their husbands will listen to the counsellor and allow them to return to work. Thus maternalism intervenes in the issues of women like a mother resolving the issues of her children. It is a particularly feminine form of power in its willingness to recognise and address patriarchy in the home.

Labour Agency

As explained in the previous chapter, in looking at labour agency at Amma's Fashions, I follow Carswell and De Neve (2013), who consider agency to be the practices of workers whose activity is restricted, mainly by their lack of material, human and social capital, in making use of the best options available to them, and turning these options to their advantage (Carswell and De Neve, 2012). As seen so far, both managers and workers seem to be happy in their jobs, and think that they benefit from what I have described as a maternalistic regime, which they see as supporting their welfare. We can identify three components of their agency: taking advantage of opportunities to work; leaving if they want; and the ability to express grievances.

As I will discuss much further in Chapter eight, women are often discouraged by their families from taking a job in a garment factory. The women working at Amma's have been able to assert themselves to go to work, which is a form of agency, and have received support from management in keeping their jobs against opposition, even if they are not always able to do so in the end.

Women at Amma's sometimes look to Ms R, not only as a mother figure but as someone who has created her own successful company (with factories producing fashion garments for overseas customers, as well as a horticultural business). As we know, the chairwoman decided to become an entrepreneur after the death of her husband. She went against her parents' wishes and started a business producing 'Batik'[39] wall hangings, working initially in a room in her parents' home. Through these achievements she has also been able to provide jobs for her two daughters, as well as one son-in-law. Although the workers at Amma's may not know this history in detail, the office staff certainly admire her considerable agency and achievement.

As we will see in chapter eight, many of the other women have joined the labour market against similar discouragement but become the backbone of the company. They work at Amma's for various reasons, including financial difficulties at home, financing further education for their younger siblings and to build a house for their family. They are often proud of their achievements too. However, some women leave the factory and employment. This is not because of abusive behaviour, as was said to

[39] Batik is a process for printing designs on cloth. Wax is put on areas of the cloth that are not to be coloured by dye.

happen at Muhammed's, but because of family wishes. Women are said, by other women, to have left because their future husbands did not want to marry someone who works in a garment factory. For instance, while I was in the field a woman machinist left the factory because she had promised her boyfriend that she would give up the job before they married, and Ms Ire, an HR executive, told me that two HR assistants left because their future husbands were not willing to marry a woman working in a garment factory. Other women leave because of family resettlement or caring responsibilities. It seems that even Ms Ire herself, who told me how much she liked her job, including her salary, left the company. She had told me that,

> I am satisfied with the salary I get [with a big smile on her face] and other benefits such as bonus, transport and even physical facilities… I am also happy because the managers are very helpful (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

She left after I had finished my fieldwork, and I was told it was because after marriage she had to go to live in her husband's hometown.

It is difficult to know whether these women saw these decisions as ones in their own interests. One of the managers said that women have other alternatives, including access to cultivated family land and other jobs, which suggests that for many both going out to work and leaving work is a matter of choice. Their exiting does mean that management has to pay constant attention to workers' welfare and take cognizance of their domestic circumstances.

Management insists that there is a grievance procedure, with workers at every level having access to the chairwoman.

> Actually, grievances, it is mainly for the workers and there is a procedure. We have appointed counsellors… Yes… they can come up to me (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Ms Rosh, the secretary to the chairwoman, describes the procedure:

> There is a separate procedure for grievance handling. It is documented. It starts from the immediate superior and then go to the next level and can go either to the MD or to ED. If the grievances are not resolved they can go to the chairman. Even the grass root level personnel are entitled for this, and this documentof the grievance procedure is displayed on the noticeboards for everyone to read (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

While working at Amma's workers do not have access to trade union support, but they say that they do not need this. Ms Nan, a machinist, supports this:

> We are given all the facilities we need by the company so there is no need for us to go against them and to form unions, but our representatives talk with the management at the JCC meeting if we have any issues (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Moreover, the counsellor, Ms M, attends to the needs of the employees and the employees are confident that they can resolve their grievances by talking to her. As we saw she can even assert herself for the interests of workers against their immediate supervisors.

The employees told me that there is no need for them to form a trade union because management ensures their well-being. In this sense, the maternalistic regime has been successful in undermining any potential collective resistance. According to Mr Chathu, the machinists work together happily,

> If we have a problem we talk to the counsellor and resolve those. If not we talk to the supervisor and get it solved. We are happy and work together. So there is no need for us to form unions (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The company has a JCC, and according to the cluster GM, Mr Hem, employees are free to voice their concerns at the JCC meeting and the company deals with those issues promptly.

> I handle the issues of workers. For example in the factories I conduct the monthly JCC meeting and attend to the needs of the employees (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Ms Shri, a supervisor, thinks that the JCC is an effective forum, although the issues it deals with are relatively trivial, such as the availability of some types of food at breakfast. She explains how the JCC meetings are held and issues are addressed.

> We have a joint council. There is a representative for each line. They have a monthly meeting. Before the meeting a paper is sent to everyone in the factory to list the issues. At the meeting these issues are discussed with the management. Me: Do they resolve the issues? S: Yes they do it then and there. Earlier there were issues in relation to breakfast now all are resolved 100% and most of the time there is nothing to be written on the paper (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The senior managers are also content when compared to Muhammed's. Whereas managers at Muhammed's who did not belong to the owner's family felt blocked in their ambitions, at Amma's Fashions, according to the GM Merchandising, Mr M, the company provides managers with opportunities for promotion and listens to their views.

> I proposed once to the top management that that the organisation has to have general managers and they agreed with it and the managers were promoted. Even now I have some proposals for changing the structure of my department and the top management is positive about it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

At Amma's employees seem to happily embrace the maternalistic regime. It stifles any resistance they might otherwise want to express and appears to support them in their ambitions. However, the regime seems unable to really change the negative views of working in garment factories, nor does it necessarily enable them to contest such opinions in the long run.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the chapter I suggested that the inequality regime at Amma's Fashions can be seen as maternalistic, and throughout this chapter I have pointed to specific management practices that support this regime. The maternalistic inequality regime moderates gender inequality and seeks to enable women in particular to remain at work, despite family crises. I identified the existence of a conflict between the patriarchal power exercised by men in the family and the maternalistic power available to Ms R, her daughter and some of the other managers.

In contrast, class and status differences are not challenged, but rather serve to legitimate, the dependence of employees on the employer. The local discourse of *Calaguna Selakeema*, which prescribes that one should be grateful to the person who does a thing in kindness inculcates a lifelong gratitude, and justifies employees' dependence on those they seem to see as their superiors. Employees' feelings of indebtedness to the company are normalised, rather than resented, because they parallel the Sri Lankan cultural and religious value *Calaguna Selakeema*. So management achieves a form of control which is apparently benign. We can argue, in this case, that wider structures allow the maternalistic regime to flourish; since, given the prevailing poverty levels, the absence of effective legal rights for paid or unpaid leave – such as family leave or sick leave – and a lack of healthcare and other insurance systems employees are naturally grateful for the intercessions of their employer. Workers are thrown onto the beneficence of their employer to help them through crises, and they show their gratitude through loyalty to a kindly employer, and are willing to display their humility and dependence through gestures of respect. Indeed, it could be argued that Ms R's power is strengthened because she and her daughter, as

women, are able to be closer to their employees, who are mostly women, than men could be. None the less, workers have other opportunities and labour turnover is perceived by managers to be frustratingly high.

The success of the maternalistic regime at Amma's – from which workers benefit – is facilitated by the position of the company in the global supply chain (producing high quality garments using skilled labour). Thus, as the business is profitable, the company is in a position to provide welfare support in order to retain skilled employees. Promotion is available at every level. When compared to Muhammad's the amount of shouting is much less, in part because some mangers attempt to absorb the pressure of targets. And incentives are generous. The maternalistic power regime also develops a loyal and grateful workforce that welcomes maternalistic management practices. In contrast, labour turnover affects production and this is mainly due to the individual acts of employees, and informal practices through which they construct their working lives (Carswell and De Neve, 2013). Most of the employees are local people who have the potential to cover their basic needs, and the presence of other factories in the area means that there are plenty of job opportunities for women. However, women's ability to leave their husbands (even husbands who make no financial contribution to the household, or who are unwilling to look after their child while the wife is at work) are limited by social ideologies which prescribe that women are the carers and nurturers of the family.

Chapter 7

The 'Pragmatic' Inequality Regime at Rama's Shirts

Introduction

In the previous chapters on Muhammad's Clothing Company and Amma's Fashions, I argued that the inequality regimes of those two case study companies could be characterised as despotic and maternalistic, respectively. This chapter presents evidence that the management of Rama's Shirts, the organisation of production and the interactions between people who work there, demonstrate the characteristics of what I will term a 'pragmatic' inequality regime. The Cambridge Dictionary (2017) defines 'pragmatic' as 'solving problems in a sensible way that suits the conditions that really exist now, rather than obeying fixed theories, ideas, or rules'[40]. I call the inequality regime pragmatic because it seems to base its decision making on pragmatic, short-term considerations, rather than articulating or defending ideologically defined beliefs about people's suitability for jobs (based on their gender, class and ethnic identities). This allows some blurring of gender inequalities in terms of who is appointed to different jobs, with, for instance, both men and women working as machinists. This regime also has a more relaxed atmosphere, for instance meeting targets is not as fiercely enforced or contested as it is in the other companies, since it does not have to meet the market demands of overseas buyers. The ritualised observance of workers' obedience to management is also less pronounced than at the other firms, and instead there is an atmosphere of relaxed but respectful cooperation between levels of the factory hierarchy.

The sections of this chapter follow the same order as the previous two chapters. I begin with a discussion of how the labour force is constructed, and will discuss significant factors in the context of a labour shortage, such as the presence of an older workforce, hiring, and promotion. I then move onto how production is managed, using shop floor employees' reported experience of targets, and whether managers and supervisors seek to control output, or not, and through what means. Finally, I discuss how far

[40] In Sinhala there is a famous phrase that explains pragmatism. It is 'thane hatiyata ane gahanawa'. Literally meaning that the nail should be hit on the correct place and condition. ('thane hatiya' is place and condition and 'ane' is nail 'gahanawa' is to hit)

workers are able to engage in activities that they feel further their individual or collective interests.

Construction of the Labour Force

In this section I identify key differences between the labour force at Rama's Shirts and the labour force at the other two companies, and explain what I was able to find out or surmise about the reasons for these differences. These differences are the age of the labour force, recruitment processes, and promotion opportunities and training. I also point to a somewhat different management policy when it comes to concerns about workers' personal lives.

A Niche for Older Employees?

Compared to Muhammad's and Amma's, Rama's Shirts is much smaller, with a workforce of about 40 people. Another significant characteristic of the workforce at Rama's Shirts is that the shop floor workers and managers are older; out of the six women I interviewed at Rama's Shirts almost all were aged between 34 and 46 years old, with only one woman below that, a 20 year-old machinist. When looking around the shop floor I could see that most of the women machinists are of similar age. In contrast, as can be seen in Appendix9, the two women machinists I interviewed at Muhammed's were 22 and 28, and I could see that the other women on the shop floor were of a similar age, therefore the workforce at Muhammed's is younger in age than at Rama's. I cannot make a direct comparison with Amma's, because the only machinist I interviewed was a 44 year old, but through my observations I saw that most of the machinists were young women in their early twenties. The age range of the men is also higher at Rama's; including the owner, the men ranged in age from 39 to 54 years, with the exception of one male ironer who was 22. In contrast, at Amma's the men I interviewed included one 26 year old, with the others between 27 and 54 years. At Muhammed's the men were in the age range of 22 to 65 years, but these figures included the managers.

What explains this age difference between employees at the three factories? One possibility is that management at Rama's is heavily dependent on hiring experienced people who are already known to them, and who in fact worked with them at other companies where they were previously employed. So the employees at Rama's are likely to be older than people who are taking up jobs in the garment industry for the

first time, or who have begun work only relatively recently. This pattern starts from the top of the hierarchy. In the absence of a younger generation of managers from the owner's own family, the owner's preference for hiring a manager he already knew might be explained as his preference for someone who can be trusted rather than an unknown applicant. We saw at both Amma's and Muhammed's that employing family members was a way of acquiring trusted senior managers. Then the manager in turn hires people he already knows, if possible.

Another possible factor to account for the age differences between employees is that the company has a shop floor labour force that is competent in producing men's shirts for the local market, but who might not be as skilled as the pattern makers, cutters and machinists at Amma's who produce fashion garments using expensive, delicate fabrics. Rama's Shirts is not part of an international supply chain. Workers at Amma's and Muhammed's also need the stamina to meet tight targets and shipment deadlines set by international buyers. In contrast, Rama's Shirts seems to be providing a niche for older, reliable workers, both women and men, whom the company feels it can depend on. Rama's workers are competent at making men's shirts, which all follow very much the same pattern, but might have difficulty in obtaining work elsewhere.

In turn, the older workers at Rama's Shirts are happy because they feel appreciated, and because no one pushes them to perform beyond their level of competence. For example, Ms N, an older machinist aged 40, says that she is happy with her position as an A+ machinist, as she would not be guaranteed a better grade elsewhere and she tried to do her best for the company.

> I am happy with the level I have achieved and I try to do my best for the organisation (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In an informal conversation, Ms N also told me that she thinks that with her competency level she could not handle complicated patterns, yet at Rama's Shirts she has been able to reach the highest grade possible for a machinist (Fieldnotes 01/07/15). Similarly, Mr S, a 54 year-old mechanic, joined Rama's Shirts after leaving another, more demanding job elsewhere. He joined Rama's four years ago, after retiring as a mechanic at another garment factory. He says,

> I worked in K garments, a leading factory in the country for 22 years and got retired. I was feeling bored at home and thought of working again. Then I saw

> an advertisement in a paper and came for the interview and now I have been here for 4 years (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

If Rama's is a niche for the older employees, they in return are loyal to the company and stay in their jobs for a long time − some have stayed for two thirds of the company's six years of existence. Out of the eleven participants (employees) I interviewed at Rama's, eight had worked there for three years or more. Several of these four women and four men expressed their loyalty and affection for the company quite explicitly. For instance, Ms Pad, a 41 year old machinist, comments that even though she is not well she does not want to leave her job as she loves the organisation a lot[41].

> I am sick and even my husband asks me to leave but I do not feel like leaving. I have been in this organisation for six years and *I love this organisation a lot* (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, Mr J, a 48 year-old ironer, says that he has no issues about working at Rama's Shirts, and that he intends to stay as long as he can.

> This place is good, I have no issues working in this factory. So *I intend to be here for long* (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The employees know that they are trusted, and therefore are willing to turn their hand to whatever they are asked, and to cooperate with each other. For instance, Mr S, the mechanic, apart from repairing machines does other work, such as going to the bank to deposit cheques and withdraw money. He says that the management trusts him.

> I am the one who goes to the bank to withdraw and deposit money and cheques and I sometimes join the owner when he goes to withdraw money to pay our salaries. They trust me and although going to bank and things are not part of my job but *I do these things willingly* (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

I suggest that hiring older employees is not undertaken as a conscious strategy, but is an outcome of hiring through personal contacts known to the owner or manager over many years. An older age range also arises from difficulties in recruiting younger workers, and keeping them from leaving, as I will discuss below. But those who remain seem to form a relatively stable workforce that is loyal to management. The older age of the women employees also means that the employer and manager feel that

[41] The Sinhala translation of 'loves the organisation a lot' is - 'ayathanayata' (organisation) 'godak' (a lot) 'adarei' (love).

they need not be concerned about protecting the respectability of the women workers, for example, trying to stop them having love affairs which happens at the other factories, but there was no evidence that this was a consideration in recruiting workers at Rama's. I discuss this final point further later on.

Hiring, Labour Shortage and Labour Turnover

Let us look a bit more closely, then, at how the factory goes about hiring new employees, and the constraints which determines their recruitment response. The interview data suggests that the use of informal contacts is the most significant feature in hiring at Rama's Shirts, with even the manager of the factory hired by the owner based on an informal contact in the past. In contrast to Muhammad's, these informal contacts are not based on family connections, but contacts developed while working in other garment factories. It is striking that when a person is known to top personnel, hiring is done even without an interview, a pragmatic step because, since there is a single person managing the whole factory, it is not possible for him to spend a lot of time on selection interviews. The whole factory employs only 40 people, so it does not really require an elaborate system for vetting possible workers; a pragmatic policy is adopted instead. Moreover, since workers play a role in recommending other workers, there is a degree of trust between workers as well.

The owner, Mr Jey (Tamil/ Hindu/Married), preferred to concentrate on getting another business off the ground, and gave his factory manager almost complete control, visiting the factory himself only two times a week. Mr R in his interview told me that six years ago, when the factory first started, he was taken in by the owner (whom he calls 'the boss') without an interview, because they had worked together in the garment industry for a quite a while and they knew each other.

> Me: Was there an interview when you joined this organisation? R: No I knew the boss [owner] for a long time as we were in the same industry, I mean the garment industry. He once suggested I join him to start a garment factory. That is how I came here. Initially we both got together and did everything such as finding a suitable building, buying the machines, hiring the employees and all that and the boss had contacts with the suppliers and buyers (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly the manager has in turn hired employees whom he has known for a while, without an interview. For instance, Ms Pad, an older woman machinist, had worked

with the manager in a different factory. As she had known him for nearly a decade no interview was necessary when she was hired.

> Me: Can you remember the first day that you came here? P: I came to know that there were vacancies here and I heard that Sir R is the manager. I filled in an application and sent it. I knew Sir R when working in the previous factory. I was there for about 3 years. Anyhow I knew Sir for nearly 10 years. Me: Who interviewed you? P: No, there was no interview. Sir knows me well so he hired me (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

These examples show that hiring is done without formal procedures, based on previous knowledge of the manager or worker. This suggests that the owner and manager place a lot of importance on trust, rather than formal skills, but are not in the position of being able to recruit the best workers or to compare the potential contribution of different possible applicants. Similarly, reflecting on the significance of informal contacts in hiring, existing employees recommend newcomers and based on their recommendations the manager hires other employees. For instance, Ms N recommended Ms D, who now works as the Sole supervisor responsible for achieving targets

> I am the one who recommended Ms D [supervisor] to Sir R. We worked together in a previous organisation and when she told me that she was in search of a job I informed Sir R that she is a capable woman. So Sir hired her for position of supervisor (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

However, Mr R does conduct some kind of interview when other employees suggest someone. For instance, Ms D in her interview told me that 'Sir R' interviewed her and inquired about her previous experience.

> Me: Can you remember the first day that you came here? D: Yes. Me: Who interviewed you? D: Sir R. He asked about my experience. I have worked in local and foreign garment factories. I also have worked as a supervisor. I told him that I was fearful of becoming a supervisor but he also said there is nothing like that [for me to worry about] and asked me to work from the same day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Being pragmatic, when an employee with whom the manager has personal contact recommends a person, the manager holds an interview prior to hiring. This indicates that the factory manager is confident in hiring those who are known to him personally, but uses selection tools in other instances. Mr S, the 54 year-old mechanic, told me that Mr R had been impressed with his service record.

> Me: Can you remember who interviewed you? S: Mr R. Me: Did he ask any questions? S: Not questions but he went through the service letters I got from previous work places. Kad Garment is a reputed one, so Mr R might have decided that if I worked there for long I am a good worker. So he asked me to work from the same day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr R's decision to employ Mr S without further inquiries or tests was very pragmatic, because at the time the factory had been struggling along without a mechanic, and some of the sewing machines were not working properly. In fact, as soon as the other employees came to know Mr R was there to work as an experienced mechanic they asked him to look at their machines.

> At the time I came for the interview there was no mechanic. A few mechanics have come and gone and when I came two or three machines were not working and the children getting to know that I am a mechanic started pleading to get the machines repaired immediately. I promised them that I will come the next day as I had to get back home for some personal matters (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The labour shortages which led Mr R to employ someone as a mechanic straightaway also disposed him to hire some employees who lacked experience in the particular job on offer, and expected them to learn on the job. It seems that Mr R does not have the time or inclination to search for the 'right' person, or one who fits pre-existing prejudices about the suitability of women or men for particular jobs. For instance, Mr R employed a woman to work as a storekeeper who lacked any experience in storekeeping. Ms L, the current storekeeper, previously worked only in a clerical job:

> Me: Can you remember the first day you came to this organisation? L: Yes it was 2010-10-01 and Mr R interviewed me. Me: What did he ask? L: He said it is the job of the storekeeper but I do not have experience but I thought I can handle the work. He had a look at my service certificate and asked me to come to work from the next day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The employment of older workers needs to be seen in the context of difficulties the factory has in attracting the young women who work as machinists in other garment factories. I was told by Mr R that labour shortage is particularly intense on the shop floor, and that they have difficulty in employing or keeping as many machinists as they would like. For instance, the manager said that he has advertised vacancies in newspapers several times, but not a single woman came in for an interview, or at least none telephoned to inquire about the vacancies. He identifies several reasons behind their difficulties in employing enough workers. Firstly, he says, young women do not

like to work in garment factories because of their negative image, especially, as we saw before, young women garment workers are stigmatisedwith a reputation for bad sexual behaviour. Secondly, the manager thinks that the location of the factory is to blame; it is located in a suburban area mainly populated by middle class families, and therefore lacks a sizable pool of possible labour from what he calls 'lower class' households. Moreover, women from such households can readily find jobs as domestic workers in nearby middle class homes, which he says they prefer. This is because the hours of work for domestic servants are more convenient, especially for women with children. Domestic servants often obtain jobs requiring only half a day's work, meaning they can return home by the time their children return from school. The earnings are also relatively good, considering the shorter hours. In addition to getting free meals while at work, a domestic servant in the area can earn about Rs 500 per day working between 8am and 2pm**,** compared to Rs 600 per day earned by women machinists at Rama's Shirts who work from 7.30 am till 5.30 pm(Fieldnotes 15/06/15). The owner of Rama's Shirts provides another reason for the labour shortage of young women. He says that young women prefer jobs that are less strenuous and − by implication − more glamorous. They can either stay at home (i.e. continue to live in Colombo) and work in boutique hotels or go abroad:

> There are lot of boutique hotels coming up outside Colombo. All these girls are going for jobs in those. So they can go to work from their homes. And also a lot of girls are now going to Qatar. The next World Cup is going to be held there and there are constructions and other things there… at the end of the day they are getting a salary which is equal to our salary but the girls are going for a change because they do not want to experience this stress all the time (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

In the factory labour turnover is said to be especially high among younger workers. Mr R says that he does not know precisely why machinists leave, since the firm does not conduct exit interviews. But besides leaving for the kind of better opportunities Mr Jey identifies, some reasons can be identified through people's stray comments and my observations. It seems that many women leave the organisation for childbirth and to look after their children, and do not return. Mr R told me that he telephoned one woman ('a good machinist') who left work at the factory about two years ago. He said she left because there is no one to look after her children. But now he has heard from another woman that her children are at school, but she is still not working. He asked

her to join the organisation again and she has said that now she feels bored at home and is inclined to come and work. Mr R has encouraged her and she said if she feels like coming then she could come the next day. Mr R said he will not believe her till she comes the next day, and as he predicted she never turned up (Fieldnotes 11/06/15). I also observed a current worker who seems to have left because of the need to look after her children. I had noticed a pregnant woman working in the packing section and, after a few days, I saw that she was no longer there. I asked another woman why she was not coming and she said the woman had had her baby, and she had to give up the job as there was no one to look after the child (Fieldnotes 01/07/15). It seems that women find working in the factory incompatible with family responsibilities. There were also insinuations that some women leave because they resent the favouritism which they say the supervisor shows to some of the machinists, and I will talk about this later.

However, it does not sound like older women are favoured. In fact, another older worker, Mrs Pad, says that younger women are encouraged:

> Whoever is hired, we all try to retain that child so that we have enough people to work (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

None the less they leave because, according to Ms N, the salaries are low, the work is hard and there are better opportunities elsewhere. Mrs N says that some of the younger women leave immediately after payday:

> N: We are helpless without children. Young women leave. Me: Why? N: They say the salaries are low and the work is hard. Some of these women get their salaries and from the next day they do not come (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In this context, older women workers have become the backbone of the labour force, and this is probably quite unusual for garment factories, and as we see below, something that may change in the future. But at present the difficulty in attracting young women and keeping them means that, as I go on to discuss, there are a few opportunities for older workers in the factory that they might otherwise not have.

Promotion Opportunities

As such a small factory Rama's Shirts offers few opportunities for promotion. Not only is it small, the owner has decided not to try to expand, at least not on the present site. Mr R knows that therefore there is no opportunity for promotion:

> Me: Will you get a promotion? R: No I do not think so. With the organisation being small scale one there is no possibility for a promotion (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

However, workers do think they have opportunities to advance themselves, and have enjoyed them in the past. While the practices they describe may be common in the garment industry, I did not hear of similar examples in the other two factories. For example, Ms Madu said that she had been promoted from helper to machinist. In garment factories helpers aid the production line to keep moving by assisting the machinists, for instance removing stray threads from garments or attaching or removing labels, and moving garments from one machinist to another as each stage of production is complete. It is a low-status, low-paid job which requires standing up all day. Machining is a skilled and better-paid job, and it is not surprising that Ms Madu sees it as a promotion.

> Me: Have you had any promotions? M: Yes I joined as a helper. Then Sir R and Ms D asked me to be trained in machines during lunch and tea breaks. I did it like that and now I am a machinist. Me: Who decided it? M: Sir R asked Ms D to allow me to sit at a machine and sew (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

For Mr R and the supervisor, Ms D, encouraging Ms Madu to gain new skills is a pragmatic move, especially given the conditions of labour shortage they face. A similar pragmatism may underlie the owner's willingness to pay more to scarce staff. It seems that even Mr Ro, the cutter was not above blackmailing the owner to get a salary rise. Since there was no possibility of promotion, he 'left this place once, but re-joined with a better salary'.

Likewise, other employees were enabled to rise to a higher position than they were accustomed to, for instance the storekeeper, Ms L, arrived with no experience but was rapidly trained by shadowing the previous storekeeper:

> For about a month the previous storekeeper gave me some training and he left and then I started developing my own ways of doing things (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

There was also an instance at the time I was doing fieldwork where Mr San, an ironer, had been told that he would be trained as a machinist, a better paid and more

comfortable job (ironing requires the worker to stand all day lifting and pushing a heavy iron).

> Me: Would you like to get a promotion? S: Yes I would like to become a machinist. Me: Do you have an opportunity to do that? S: Yes. Sir R told me that he will teach me to sew and promote me as a machinist (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Here again we find management making pragmatic decisions to cover labour shortages, rather than adopting rigid or impractical policies about which gender is suitable for which job. While they do not see these as promoting gender equality or class mobility, in practice the straits a company is in can lead to some benefits for individual workers, and breaks in conventional employment patterns (men working as machinists is relatively rare). But other employees seem to remain happy within their jobs, even without promotion, perhaps being grateful for having a job at all at their age. Ms N says that she has achieved the maximum possible level in her career ladder.

> Me: Do you expect a promotion? N: I am an A+ machinist so it is the maximum (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Training

Training at Rama's Shirts is of the informal kind I have just described. Not only do workers shadow other workers to learn the job, workers seem to be willing to help each other. Thus Ms Pad, an experienced machinist, told me that they are willing to train any of the newcomers.

> Whenever a newcomer arrives we see that we support them to work, and teach them what we know because we have experience (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

More formal training, of the kind offered at Muhammed's, is not required, and this means that the firm is absolved from trying to deliver life guidance, such as that provided by the Ladder program at Muhammad's at the behest of international buyers. This means that at Rama's workers are not subjected to the intensely moralistic, gender-specific instruction that we saw featured in that programme at Muhammed's.

Other Human Resource Practices

Several other practices at Rama's Shirts follow the same pragmatic, hands-off, relaxed attitudes that we have considered so far. While these may not always support long-

term advantages for workers, they mean that there is little or no overt conflict in the factory.

Firstly, it appears that the firm is not paying into the state-run Employee Provident Fund[42] for all of the workers, as required by law. According to Mr R,

> We do not give it to everyone. If they stay for a while we start paying (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

This is again a pragmatic practice,since newcomers, especially among young women, so frequently soon leave. There is only one manager handling all the administrative work, and his strategy is to start paying EPF only once he has received a certain assurance that an employee will remain for a while.

This same pragmatism is also evident in the company's explicit decision not to interfere in workers' personal or sexual lives. The owner, Mr Jey, is thought by staff and workers to be 'a religious person' and seems to be modest in his demeanour and relatively formal with employees. Mrs N told me that,

> Our boss is a good person. All the bosses are not like that. He does not even look at children when he comes to the factory. He does his work in his office and conducts meetings and leaves. If he wants he can dance with women.[43] But he is not that type of a person. He is like a father to us. He is a religious person. When he talks to us on special occasions he asks us to be religious (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr Jey restricts his own involvement to checking in with the manager, supervisor and two male workers (the cutter and mechanic), and does not throw his weight around.

Mr R is similarly reluctant to get involved in other people's personal lives, and hardly has time to do so but he helps when asked. For instance as Ms Pad, an older machinist, told me,

> We can discuss even our personal issues with Sir R. I have some sicknesses and have to undergo a womb operation and I can discuss even such personal matters with Sir R(Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Other workers agree. Mr R is usually quite relaxed, for instance, if workers need time off. Ms Pad says that getting an approval for leave is easy with Mr R. Similarly, Ms

[42] I discussed the EPF in the chapters on country context and Muhammad's Clothing.
[43] 'Dance with women' implies immoral behaviour.

N, also an older machinist, says she got sick a few months back and management dealt with it by giving her more flexibility. She believes her condition is due to an evil spirit invading her body (she showed me the cylinder that hangs from her hip that she was given by a mystic as medication for her sickness), and that the condition is exacerbated by the smoke that spreads through the factory on Friday morning, when coconut shells and incense are burned near the pictures of the Hindu gods and goddesses before work starts. However, Mr R is happy for her to come to work after 10 a.m. on Fridays without a reduction in salary, so that she is not exposed to the smoke. Another older machinist, Ms Thi, says that Mr R helped her many times in her personal matters when she was in need.

> We talk to Sir R, even if my child gets sick I inform him. He talks well with us and also helps us. When my mother died he collected some money and gave it to me. So I am thankful for that (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

However, when it comes to workers' sexual lives, neither Mr Jey nor Mr R will get involved or interfere. They say that despite the employees at Rama's being older, there have been love affairs among married women and men and these affairs have led to problems. Mr R insists that all these happenings take place outside the organisation so management does not need to interfere; even when women and men fought this took place outside the organisation:

> These women and men develop undue affairs. Then these lead to problems. One woman had such an affair with a man working in some other place and the wife of that man hit this woman when she was coming to work and they had a fight. I have not come across any incidents within the factory but these occur outside (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The owner, in his interview, also told me that employees develop 'undue affairs' outside the organisation. He says that these happenings have in the past led workers to leave:

> There are issues and because of those, people left also. Me: What kind of issues? J: Not inside but after they leave the premises due to various personal problems like unwanted relationships, they fight. We always tell them that we are not responsible for such incidents, we are strict to work related problems only; we do not get involved in other issues especially taking place outside the premises. Also we do not come to discuss their personal matters as well. But these incidents affect us also because when they leave the company because of these issues then we are in lack of labour. Me: Any incidents that occurred within the factory? J:No nothing, everything outside only (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

It can be seen, therefore, that in many respects management operates, by default, a kind of *laissez-faire* employment policy, in which they only interfere if absolutely necessary. If workers are criticised or penalised then they risk having them leave outright. While the relaxed atmosphere might mean that workers lose out − for instance lack of attention to health and safety, as I note later − it also makes it unnecessary to constantly hector workers about their personal lives. For management, however, labour turnover and shortage is an important issue. At present, Mr R says, they have to turn down orders from their two main local buyers because they do not have enough staff to make enough garments to fulfil them.

> We do not earn enough profits but we have a goodwill for the company and we get orders and in the market we are well recognized but the issue is that we do not have sufficient workers (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Given the gravity of the labour shortage and labour turnover, Mr R told me that he has gotten the owner's consent to relocate the factory to a rural area where female labour is more plentiful. He is looking for a building spacious enough to accommodate the existing machinery in order to relocate the factory. As I discuss further below, this will mean many employees who now enjoy a relaxed, pragmatic regime losing their jobs. Up to now, however, apart from Mr R and Mr Jey no one discussed the fact that the factory will be relocated (Fieldnotes 11/06/15).

Managing Production

Let me now look at how production is managed at Rama's Shirts, and what it tells us about interactions in the company. This discussion begins with target setting and suggests that the targets are not as tight as in the other case study companies, which serve foreign markets. Probably in consequence, shouting at workers at Rama's is not as prominent as at Muhammad's, although it still occurs. The supervisor shouts sometimes, but the factory manager, I observed, rarely raises his voice. One of the ways the factory manages, though short-staffed, is by getting workers to do multiple job roles. None the less, although there is a more relaxed and calm atmosphere than at Muhammed's, the workers are still called children, and attendance and punctuality can be sources of contention.

Target Setting

At Rama's Shirts target setting is not as severe as at Muhammad's Clothing or Amma's Fashions, because it serves the local market and produces only men's shirts. Rama's does not have to meet the seasonal, contractual deadlines set by overseas buyers, or risk penalties or losing these contracts if it does not fulfil them on time. Nor does it have to meet shipping deadlines or fear incurring the cost of airfare if shipments are delayed. Moreover, men's shirts are more similar in pattern than fashion garments (although the workers say there is still a lot of variation) so there is not so much time lost learning how to stitch new styles. However, the constant labour shortage still leads management to pressure machinists to meet the targets it sets. The owner implies that given these pressures and unpleasant working conditions he is hardly surprised workers leave:

> I feel like this. In this garment field you have to give a target I think that affects them. Now if you go on and work in other places like a Food City[44] you will not get this much of a stress, even you get other facilities such as air conditioning. Even though their salaries are lower than ours they are not stressed but daily we pressurize our staff asking for daily quantities, and they are stressed (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

In addition to what he knows about common problems in the garment industry he is aware that employees in his factory lack the facilities that may be present in other factories.

Although the workers I interviewed seem to respect the owner, they claim that targets are unrealistic. According to Ms N, her ability to meet targets varies, depending on the fabric as well as the number of mistakes the machinist makes (and which have to be rectified).

> I have an hourly target. I have to attach 40 collars and close the same 40. So for an hour I have to complete both 80 tasks. But you cannot assure that you can get a daily average of 40. Sometimes there may be errors. Fabric may be a different one, then the target goes down. The other side is also the same. If the fabric is easy to sew and if we do not make errors then I might sew 50 to 55 pieces as the daily average. Now our boss has given us a monthly average target of 40. But it is not achievable (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The manager handles employees in a friendly manner, since the labour shortage means he doesn't want to risk an experienced machinist leaving. Once the manager

[44] The owner refers to a supermarket chain in Sri Lanka.

telephoned a woman machinist who had taken leave for one day to attend a wedding but not turned up the next day. The manager raised his voice and said, 'I gave you leave for one day and you are absent even today'. After the woman answered the manager said, 'OK I understand but ensure that you come to work tomorrow'. He then told me that he had not shouted at the woman because if he shouts the women will not turn up the next day (Fieldnotes 01/07/15). The above example indicates that employees, especially the machinists, exercise a certain amount of power at Rama's and, understanding the exit power of employees, Mr R manages situations pragmatically.

Other employees also recognise that the manager handles the employees without much shouting. An ironer, Mr San, comments that in a previous factory he worked at workers were frequently shouted at, even using rude words, but Mr R does not curse them in a bad manner.

> In the previous factory they shouted a lot. They even used filth to women but Sir R does not shout like that (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Mr Ro, the cutter, told me that the manager strictly 'advises' employees when they do not achieve targets but he does not shout.

> In this organisation shouting is at a minimum. In other factories they shout when targets are not achieved. Then children also shout back. Here there isn't much shouting. If targets are not achieved Sir R calls the person andheavily emphasizes the need to achieve targets but does not force to a greater extent (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The above are examples of how the manager attempts to achieve targets with the least amount of shouting. He has the ultimate responsibility in managing the organisation, and he has the power to decide when to accept it if a worker cannot meet set targets. In contrast, the supervisor, Ms D, a 34 year-old unmarried woman, is caught in the middle between the machinists (whom she says are 'like friends') and the manager, whom she has to inform if the employees do not achieve targets.

> I have some issues with children. These are mainly due to targets. If not I am friendly with the children. They are also of my age. I am not married yet. So I am friendly with them and talk like friends. We are like friends. But when it comes to production however much I am friendly with them I am not lenient. It is the same for everyone. When they do not achieve targets I have to inform it to sir R. If not he does not know about it. When I pressure them to achieve targets

> I know they get angry with me. But I am responsible to my boss. This is my job. Children do not understand it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

However, some of the workers I interviewed suggested that the supervisor was relatively easy-going. Ms Thi, an older machinist, explained that other than yelling there were no other harassments in the factory.

> It is like this. When the production target is not met the supervisor becomes responsible. So she sometimes talks loud. Other than that there are no other harassments here (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

However, Rama's does not make incentive payments for achieving targets, as is the case at Muhammad's and Amma's, providing instead an annual bonus decided by the owner and the manager. These bonuses vary between Rs 5000 and 15000 (which I discussed in the chapter on organisational context). For some staff the bonus can be considerable. For instance, according to Ms D, the supervisor

> Even this year I was given Rs 15000 as a bonus but I did not expect that much (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Occasionally management also provides a small treat, which workers see as given by the owner personally, such as a free meal. During my fieldwork I observed one such occasion. The employees had worked very hard continuously for two months and met targets to get shirts into the shops for an upcoming Muslim festival. The day after the employees completed the order the owner arranged for a caterer to supply a rich lunch (biriyani, chicken and watalappan) to all the employees. The employees enjoyed the meal and they were talking about how generous their owner was and how much he appreciated their efforts (Fieldnotes 01/07/15). The workers were appreciative of even this little treat, as they are from lower class families and could not afford to buy such rich food themselves.

Multiple Job Roles

Another way management seeks to cope with labour shortages is by getting employees to take on multiple roles, rather than employing different people for each responsibility. The management cadre consists only of the manager, assisted by the supervisor, without the panoply of different roles that are filled at the other factories. The manager knew that he would have many responsibilities when he accepted the job offer. The owner, Mr Jey, expects Mr R to manage the factory, with the assistance only of one supervisor, and at best follows up on them:

> Me: So you have given the responsibility to others to manage this? J: The thing is this, there is an experienced production manager and also a supervisor, so I have given a task to them.My task is every day I follow up with them and they will report me back. Every month we call for a board meeting and we discuss (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

This is a pragmatic decision in the light of Mr Jey's other business interests, for which he travels frequently.

> This is not the only business I manage. I import readymade clothes. So always I go overseas. And I am managing two companies. This is Rama's Shirts and the other one is Rama's which imports clothes [from Thailand and Indonesia] and mostly I deal with that (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

In Sri Lanka there is a good demand for imported women's clothes by the middle and upper classes, especially in the capital city, because they indicate high social status.

As Mr J says, both the manager and the supervisor have a wide range of responsibilities. Mr R told me that he even does manual work when required. He is responsible for the overall management.

> I mean not only production… I prepare salaries and I handle the issues of employees, apart from those even other issues, say for example if an employee throws some garbage to the adjoining land I am answerable… Not only that I some time carry goods up and down if there is no one to do it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly Ms D, the supervisor commented that the owner (whom she refers to as 'boss') had given the responsibility of the overall management to her and to the manager, and she and the manager are answerable even for the errors of other employees.

> Boss [the owner] has instructed me and Sir R to supervise and take care of everything. So we have the responsibility. Even if children do something wrong we get the blame (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Target setting means the supervisor must consider the complications involved in sewing different patterns, take up any employees' problems that impact on production (such as finding one worker a boarding house), and sometimes help the quality checkers and even packers when they are over-loaded (Fieldnotes 11/06/16). I also discussed in the chapter on organisational context how the women machinists take it in turns to prepare tea and sweep the floor, and the ironers carry out the garbage.

Employees are expected to be as flexible and pragmatic as management, for instance they are warned in advance that they might have to turn their hands to anything. For instance, the manager told Mr J when he was hired that he would have to do other jobs, besides his work as an ironer, such as carrying cartons.

> Me: Who interviewed you? J: Sir R. Me: What did he ask? J: He asked about the place where I worked before. I told him that I worked in the N Garment. Then he said there are cartons to carry and also cloth rolls to carry. He asked whether I can do such things. I said yes. Then he asked me to come to work from the next day (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr J also performs the Hindu religious rituals in the morning, operates the boiler for the women to make tea and carries the garbage out to the collection point with the help of other ironer, Mr San. Similarly, Mr Ro, the cutter, told me that besides being the cutter he has to prepare the markers, blocking out the patterns on paper. He said that in other factories these markers are drawn using a computer package but he does it manually. (I observed how computer operators, called 'marker makers', prepared markers at Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions. It was seen as a skilled job.) Some of the multiple jobs done by the employees seemed unsafe to me, but the workers do not make complaints about having to use inadequate equipment. For instance there is a machine for pressing collars next to the cutting table which is operated by one of the helpers, a young married woman. She has to insert the upper and lower layers of the collar, with stiffening in the middle, to seal them together using heat. However, the machine was in a terrible state. Some technical problem meant that the cover had been removed, so the person operating the machine could be burnt, or receive an electric shock from the exposed wires and circuits. The heat also escaped into the surrounding area, leading to discomfort for anyone nearby. The way buttons were dyed was also dangerous. Mr San, a young ironer, used a gas cooker in the corridor at the entrance to the factory, resting directly on the floor, and boiled water in a pan. With a spoon he added the colour and then put the buttons into the boiling water to soak. From time to time he removed some buttons with the spoon to see if they matched the cloth for the garment for which they will be used. He continued this process till he got the perfect colour (Fieldnotes 01/07/15). He can easily get burnt by the boiling water, and also if the pan was upset the boiling water might fall on him, or on the many people coming through the corridor.

We can see, then, how the workers and managers maintain a pragmatic approach to how work is organised, and the workers are encouraged to do likewise. The division of labour is simple and flexible, and there is a man doing a woman's job (as a machinist) and a woman doing what is often a man's (as head storekeeper). Even working class people are given responsibility, for instance taking things to the bank. More significantly, the hierarchy in the factory is quite flat (owner, manager, supervisor and shop floor workers), and apart for the owner, who mainly keeps himself aloof from all except the manager, supervisor and two male workers (the cutter and mechanic), they all muck in together on tasks. All this tends to blur somewhat the steepness and explicitness of the social inequalities which at Muhammed's and Amma's are constantly being re-emphasised through the ceremonial and formal interactions in which subordinates show their respect to top managers.

Continuing Hierarchies

However, one should not exaggerate the degree of informality at Rama's, because the managers still make rules that they expect subordinates to follow, and this makes very clear who is expected to direct activities and who is expected to follow orders. For instance, the manager tries to insist on certain standards regarding punctuality and attendance. Mr San, an ironer, told me in his interview thatthe manager expects employees to come to work on time and to inform the manager if they wanted to take leave. Even Ms D, the supervisor, is subject to these rules, and explained how she was disciplined by the manager soon after she began working at the factory:

> Sir R is very particular about punctuality. He does not allow any of us to come in late. Initially at the start I got late for about two days. He called me and said that I have to be aware about my punctuality. After that I made up my mind and never came late (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The other workers, like Ms D, mainly accept these rules, and do not challenge management very often (the machinist who stayed off work an extra day was an exception). But one also told me that Mr R usually gives leave without demur.

Another marker of inequality at Rama's Shirts is the way managers call the factory women workers 'children', and the acceptance of this by the women machinists, who use the same word when referring to each other. People in the factory therefore follow industry practice in calling garment workers 'children'. Almost all the workers called children are women, but Ms D also refers in passing to calling for help from a 'girl

child or a boy child', suggesting that the term is used for both men and women. The only exception is for some of the male workers (i.e. the cutter and the mechanic) and the woman supervisor (but not the woman storekeeper, Ms L) whom the owner calls 'staff'.

> Now below the owner it is me and then the staff that has more men I mean S and Ro and the supervisor Ms D (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In contrast there is a difference between workers in how they speak about the manager, Mr R. Thus Ms L the storekeeper and the mechanic Mr S address the manager as Mr R but the supervisor Ms D calls him Sir. This reflects class difference and even if Ms D has a managerial role she represents the working class but the storekeeper is from the lower middle class. This shows how Ms D is treated slightly differently by the manager even if she is having a better opportunity and works in a higher position in the hierarchy.

Similarly the owner keeps in contact only with the manager, supervisor, cutter and the mechanic. The owner said:

> I only supervise the production manager, mechanic, supervisor and the cutter. I look into their issues…Directly I do not keep contact with my factory workers but the manager and the supervisor deal with them. And even for meetings I call the manager, supervisor, cutter and the mechanic (Tamil/Hindu/Married).

The above evidence suggests that status differences are reproduced by the way people are addressed, and I suggest that, in contrast to factory floor employees who are almost all women, the owner and manager identify a set of employees, including only one woman, as 'staff'.

How people dress also connotes status, but in a rather complicated way. The owner of Rama's Shirts wears a long-sleeved shirt and trousers, the manager wears a short-sleeved shirt and trousers, and the two other men in the factory who the owner deals with directly wear t-shirts and trousers. So there is a degree of difference among the men, especially between the owner and manager to the others. The differences among the women are more marked. Because the women working at Rama's are married women with children, and older than in the other two factories, there is not so much fuss about whether or not women workers or office staff can wear jeans. Even though they are called children, they are seen as sensible and responsible. They usually wear half-length skirts and tops or long dresses, and the few younger women wear jeans and

tops, frocks and short skirts and tops. However, the supervisor wears a saree most of the time. When she first came to work at Rama's, Ms D wore the same sort of clothes as the younger women machinists, but some of the older women requested her to wear a saree. Ms N told me that:

> N: Ms D [supervisor] in the initial days came to work wearing a frock or a skirt and a blouse. But I and some other colleagues of mine requested her to wear a saree. Me: Why is that? N: She is the supervisor so that has to be a difference between her and us. We know that she is the supervisor and we give her due respect. But when new recruits come in if they cannot identify her as the supervisor they will not treat her properly. So we wanted her to wear saree and now she does it (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

There could be several issues behind this request. It could be that, as Ms N says, they want to ensure that production runs smoothly, so that the company continues to get contracts and their jobs remain secure. For this reason they have an interest in ensuring that the younger women recognize the superior status (and accept orders from) the supervisor. As Ms N said another time, 'We are helpless without children' and the owner and manager seem to worry about the young women leaving. However, it might also be that they themselves find taking orders from a younger woman awkward, or even humiliating, and so want the supervisor to signify her status as a 'madam' who is entitled to their respect. Since relations in the factory are relatively relaxed, shopfloor employees may feel it is particularly necessary that the supervisor plays her role properly.

Labour Agency

I now consider aspects of workers' agency at Rama's Shirts. To compare Rama's to the other two factories, I consider how far workers can act in what they see as their own interests, and how this in turn may shape the inequality regime of the factory. In the case of Rama's I will consider workers' resistance and resilience, and then provide some ideas about how these shape life in the factory.

First of all it is necessary to say that the agency of the younger and older workers operates very differently. Unfortunately, I interviewed only one of the younger workers, Ms Madu. This is because I made the mistake of insisting on interviewing workers' employed for one year or more, and this meant that in this factory I interviewed mainly older workers, which suggests that few of the younger workers had remained in their jobs for one year. It seems that the younger workers' agency is

expressed by leaving; as indicated before they leave mainly for other jobs or to have and look after children. However, the decisions of younger workers to leave shape how the factory operates in important ways, because it makes management much more considerate of its older workers whom it needs to hold onto and is more willing to accede to their requests. Moreover, with a constant labour shortage, management is forced to continue a pragmatic operation in which workers can advance up the factory job hierarchy, to a small degree.

Under this regime workers express themselves as satisfied with how they are treated by the owner and manager, and it is hard to find any examples of either informal or formal resistance within the factory. As seen earlier, there are many examples of both male and female workers, as well as the machinists' supervisor, expressing satisfaction with how they are managed. As seen above, women seem to find 'Sir R' easy to talk to, saying things like 'We can discuss even our personal issues with Sir R', and he even helps them out financially in a crisis. Ms D, the supervisor, also sees Mr R as helpful:

> I can discuss any issue with Mr R and everyone is aware of it. For example if I am over-loaded with my work I inform Mr R and he asks me to get the help of a girl child or a boy child (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

This is also true of the few male workers. Mr Ro, the cutter, is of the view that the manager is a good person.

> He helps me if I have issues in my work and even getting a leave approved is not difficult (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The ways that the manager deals informally with workers' problems means that the factory does not require any grievance handling procedures, nor is there a counsellor[45] to deal with them, as in the other two factories. The workers do not have much to do with the owner, but see him as a good man who pays salaries on time, even when profits are down. Indeed, Mr Jey himself takes pride in this, commenting that 'as an owner my main responsibility is to pay the salary on time to my staff' (Tamil/Hindu/Married). Ms N, an older machinist, says,

[45]The Sinhala word for counsellor is 'Upadeshaka' but most people use the term counsellor.

> Our salaries are paid on time and not reduce even a cent[46]. I know that sometimes the production is low and not gaining profits but the owner gives instructions that the salaries should be paid on time… and sometimes he may use his personal salary. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

According to the manager the company also pays Rs 10,000 in an emergency, such as a funeral, and even advances money on request.

The one area of hostility towards management (and a source of disagreement among the workers) regards the behaviour of the supervisor, Ms D, who some of the workers say has her favourites, whom she treats better than the others. Two of the older women suggest that Ms D yells at some of the women and treats them differently, and that this is one of the reasons why the young women quit their jobs. Ms L (storekeeper) told me that Ms D has her favourites and she always takes their side whenever a problem arises. Ms L also said that Ms D openly says that she makes people go home if they cannot work with her in harmony. According to Ms L, the manager, Mr R, also listens to Ms D and he totally believes her which prevents him from seeing the 'right picture'. In addition, a middle-aged machine operator, Ms Nil, told me that Ms D shouts at woman and the young ones do not tolerate this, although the middle-aged women manage as they are 'more mature'. Ms Nil too believes that the labour turnover among young women is due to the supervisor's shouting (Fieldnotes 11/06/15). But not all the workers agree. For instance, Ms Madu, a young machinist, said that the supervisor is helpful and resolves their grievances.

> Our supervisor is capable of handling our issues and sometimes she discusses them with the manager and gives us solutions (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

And an older machinist, Ms Thi agrees:

> Ms D instructs us and it is not even difficult for us to discuss a personal matter with her (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Perhaps most significant is the way that some of the workers talk about the factory as if they and the owner are on the same side. For instance, Ms N, as noted above, says that '*We* are helpless without children' (italics added), i.e. without young workers staying in their jobs. Ms Pad says that 'I love this organisation a lot'

[46] Rupees and Cents are the Sri Lankan currency. The cent is the lowest amount that can be paid using Sri Lankan currency. So Ms N attempts to highlight that the owner pays their total salary all the time without any deduction.

(Sinhala/Buddhist/Married). Her commitment extends even beyond her own interests in improving her health:

> I have to undergo an operation. So I thought of leaving in two months. But due to the prevailing situation, I mean lack of children to work here, I do not feel like leaving. I love this organisation. I have been here for six years, now (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

These loyal and satisfied workers go beyond complying with management practices, rather they actively identify with the firm's interests. These examples are clear evidence of the employees not simply acquiescing to management's prerogatives (never mind resisting) but embracing them − in their own interests. This seems to be mainly because they realize that as older workers they have few other employment opportunities; and although they don't say so, they seem to enjoy the company and long-term friendships of the other workers. They also appreciate the pragmatic way the factory is run.

Conclusion

The evidence I presented throughout this chapter shows the specific characteristics of the pragmatic inequality regime at Rama's Shirts, and highlights its differences from the regimes characterising social relations at the other two factories. There are both costs and gains of this regime to workers and managers. Rama's is not part of an international supply chain, so as we saw in Chapter on organisational context it cannot afford to pay wages or salaries that are as good as at the other two case study firms, nor does it offer such substantial incentives for meeting targets. Since the owner is keeping the factory going on only a short-term basis there is little new investment in buildings or machinery, and this means the workplace is uncomfortable and even dangerous in some respects. Nor does the factory need to meet the compliance requirements of overseas buyers, either regarding training or working conditions. But the absence of long-term control strategies within the factory also has its plus side, in so far as the owner has no interest in 'micro-managing' employees' behaviour, and allows the manager to be pragmatic in assigning work. The owner says that this is because he is concentrating on developing another business, based on investing in an overseas garment factory. Moreover, as we shall see, the more relaxed conditions mean that older workers who might not be able to maintain the outputs expected by the productivity requirements at other firms have been able to retain their jobs.

The most striking characteristic is the way that pragmatic attitudes stretch from the top to the bottom of the factory hierarchy. This has disadvantages for the workers, for instance their equipment and working conditions are poor, and they do not enjoy the free lunches workers are given at the larger factories. But management makes decisions based on their immediate need for workers, and is relatively relaxed because of the fear of long-time workers leaving. This gives the older, long-term workers a certain amount of bargaining power, for instance over asking for leave. Hence it is not surprising that they contribute to sustaining the inequality regime, through their consent, and indeed their attachment to their jobs. This is a good example of what Carswell and De Neve (2013) call labour's contribution to 'reworking' the terms and conditions of their employment. But their acceptance of the existing conditions of work seems unlikely to shift management's decision to move the factory to a rural area, and if that happens most of the workers will probably lose their jobs. It would certainly be interesting to be able to see what transpires if that happens, and if the workers feel betrayed, especially those who have put the company's interests above their own.

Secondly, we have seen that contestations between the management and workers are few, except perhaps for conflict between Ms D and the sewing machinists who work under her supervision. In part, this is due to lack of ambition by the firm, and their relative lack of resources; they do not try to establish elaborate programmes of instruction, annual ceremonies, or weekly bonuses, and ironically this removes areas that might otherwise prove fertile ground for antagonisms to fester. The owner, in particular, plays a rather background role, so has acquired the reputation of a benign figure − which in paying their wages on time he no doubt deserves. Meals are not served, so there is no opportunity to seat managers and workers separately by rank. Hence although the company makes no real attempt to *reduce* inequalities in the firm, it does not do anything that emphasizes or solidifies them beyond the class and gender inequalities experienced in Sri Lanka's society.

Why this small company operates so differently from the other two is a useful question to ask. It may be that the location of the factory has made it difficult for it to grow, and therefore to hook into the international garment chains which potentially enable owners to obtain higher profits, and in turn pay higher wages. But staying outside the

international garment chain may also offer (possibly short-term) advantages to workers, in so far as the employers can be more relaxed about targets or quality of output. But there are hints that it will not be able to maintain the factory, or its regime, indefinitely.

Chapter 8

Managing Work and Family

Introduction

This chapter explores how family relations affect my research participants' employment, and also how employment affects their family and household relations. I argue that: women's participation in paid employment is constrained by patriarchal norms; that social class is significant in women's decisions to take up paid employment; and that women's participation in paid work can challenge patriarchal authority within the home. In order to develop this argument, in the first part of this chapter I explore the effects of gendered family-household relations on work participation. I look at prevalent cultural norms surrounding women's respectability and their effects on women's employment in garment factories; how married women deal with the expectations of their husbands; and the effects of family networks on the employment of the participants. In the second part I look at the effects of gendered work participation on family/household relations and responsibilities. Within this section I present an analysis of the households of my participants and explore how women's and men's employment and level of earnings affect patriarchal authority within families and domestic gender divisions of labour.

The Effects of Gendered Family/Household Relations on Work Participation

In this section I discuss how family and household relations affect women's work participation. I first look at the construction of women's respectability and how women employees' in the garment industry, especially in the Free Trade Zones (FTZs), are characterised as immoral. Next I discuss how married women cope with the expectations of their husbands and how gendered power relations affect women's choices and decisions. Then I discuss the role of family networks and their support to their employment which vary according to gender and social class. I suggest that women's participation in paid work can challenge patriarchal authority within the home.

Women's Respectability and Employment in the Garment Industry

In Sri Lanka parents believe that young women are vulnerable without the protection of older men in the family (Lynch, 2007). The ideal respectable woman is sexually innocent and constrained by shame and fear[47] in her speech, behaviour and clothing; she is obedient and submissive, and a virgin before marriage (Lynch, 2007; Hewamanne, 2008). Women who work in garment factories are not considered respectable and are regarded as morally questionable. FTZs are seen as places of free-living for unsupervised young women without male protection and much is made of their alleged sexual transgressions (Hewamanne, 2003; Ruwanpura, 2011). This is because Sri Lankan society still places a heavy emphasis on women's respectability and moral purity especially among middle class families, and this is emulated by the lower class (Hewamanne, 2008). This is in line with women's role as reproducers and disseminators of culture and the nation, as discussed in the chapter on country context. Parents take extra care to raise a daughter who is morally good, hence daughters are subject to a traditional controlled upbringing (Herath, 2015).

Jobs in garment factories are not considered respectable, with the FTZs being called things like Sthri Puraya (City of Women), Prema Kalape (Love Zone), and even Vesa Kalape (Whore zone) (Hewamanne, 2010). Further, using the name 'Juki', the name of the Japanese industrial sewing machines mostly used in factories, 'Juki Kello' (Juki Girls) is a derogatory term used for women working in factories, with a strong implication of moral impurity. This has negative effects on women's reputations, with, for instance, some marriage proposals in newspapers telling garment women not to respond (Lynch, 1999a).

In this context young unmarried women struggle to get their parents' consent to enter the labour force, especially if they want to work in garment factories. But as my data shows, women do not always accept their parents' wishes. A few women in their interviews commented that their parents are guided by common social beliefs on the respectability of young women. Ms Ro, secretary to the chairwoman at Amma's Fashions, explained the underlying attitude of society towards women's respectability, which is that only some jobs are suitable. Further, it is believed that women's

47 In Sinhala 'lajja' is shame and 'baya' is fear, the "fear of ridicule or social disapproval"(Obeyesekere 1984: 504 cited in Lynch 1999a)

protection is ensured when women work under socially respectable, mature professional men. According to Kelleher (2011), in Sri Lanka teaching is one of the few occupations considered respectable. As one participant told me,

> My parents applied the concept of a ripened papaw to me. They believe that if a papaw has ripened one should pluck it and keep it inside so that not even an insect can harm it. Similarly a respectable young woman should be looked after properly by the parents. So before marriage, they allowed me to work in an educational institution in which the owner is a retired principal of a leading boys' school (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

She conformed to her parents' wishes, other women, however, did not. The story of Ms R, the founder and chairwoman of Amma's Fashions, is a good example of how parents try to restrict their daughters' work decisions, not only for young unmarried women. but also even for widowed women with children. Ms R, however, defied her father's wish and the definition of respectable jobs and became a successful entrepreneur, whose business now employs more than 6000 people.

> With the demise of my husband I went to live with my parents with the two little daughters. I thought I must do something and when I told my father he said wants me to study again. But it was not an easy thing with the kids. I thought to myself I had done Batik as a hobby and I wanted to start it at a commercial scale. He said, you are not the type to handle labour and marketing. I thought I will think for myself and started it. It is the beginning of this company (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Young, unmarried women from the lower and middle social classes, living with their parents, also had difficulties in getting the consent of their parents to work in a garment factory, especially in FTZs. However, when there is a financial need for their income they are able to go against the wishes of their parents and join garment factories. For instance, Ms MS, a machinist from a remote tea estate, says that she did not follow her father's wishes and another participant, Ms Shri, now working as a supervisor, explains:

> Soon after O/L[48] examination I decided to go to work because my father managed the family with a great difficulty. I got the appointment letter on my 18th birthday to work in a garment factory in the Katunayake FTZ[49]. But my father refused. But I decided to go. After that I became a strength to my father to run the family (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

48 General Certificate of Examination (GCE) – Ordinary Level (O/L) – This is the first public exam taken by the school children in Sri Lanka at the age of 16.
49 Katunayake FTZ is the first free trade zones established in Sri Lanka in 1978.

Young women themselves are aware that respectability is highly valued, and although they have jobs they are careful to show that they remain respectable daughters. These women pointed out that they are aware of their behaviour all the time as the possibility of 'ruining' a life is high. They have seen through their own eyes how some women may even commit suicide if they become pregnant outside marriage, so strong is the social stigma against this. Women's accounts show the competing pressures on women, and the contradictory positions that they are in. Ms Shri, a supervisor, points out an example:

> In Katunayake both men and woman live together so we have to be very careful. Here we go home daily after work but there if you want you can go to the boarding or anywhere else. If something happens you ruin your whole life. There is no one to look after you. There are lot of women who felt in trouble… some even committed suicide (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Through working in garment factories, however, young women gain a certain amount of independence and financial stability and are proud that they can support their families. Some of them seek independence in their personal lives, for instance seeking outside employment in order to be able to maintain their relationship with a boyfriend. Ms T, a middle-class, HR executive, says that:

> While being at home my mother does not allow me to go out alone. I cannot meet or talk to my boyfriend. So the need for a job became essential. My mother does not highlight the need for money… but what made me apply for a job is to meet the boyfriend because my mother and brothers were against my relationship… I was not angry with them but I obeyed them in the sense that with their consent I found a job for myself and live in a boarding house now. Initially my mother did not like it because it is a garment factory. There is a Free Trade Zone closer to our village … she knows about the negative attitude about garment girls (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Even with the negative attitudes towards women in the garment industry, young unmarried women from different social classes decide to work in garment factories mostly for their independence and, as the above participant explained, specifically to meet her boyfriend. Thus by being in employment she has the freedom to meet her boyfriend; this is because she can afford to pay for rooms in a private boarding house and is therefore able to live away from home. So going against parents' wishes and making their own decisions, while being risky, can be seen as challenging patriarchal control and gaining independence in meeting their boyfriends and paying for their own expenses.

Working in the garment industry, however, involves the risk of being labeled 'not respectable/immoral' and later being rejected as a potential marriage partner. Some women are even forced by their families to leave work or to marry by their early twenties, as otherwise they may not be able to find a partner.[50]According to stories I was told in the factory, many women do in fact leave factory work because of its bad reputation. In particular their husbands or future husbands seem to fear their own status being lowered by marrying a factory worker. Someboyfriends force women to give up their jobs before marriage because they are not ready to face the challenge of marrying a woman labelled as 'not respectable'. Ms Ire, a HR executive, told me that:

> We had two young women as HR assistants and they left recently to get married. They wish to work but their boyfriends have asked them to resign, as they do not like to marry a woman working in a garment factory (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Some women, though, continue to work, even after marriage; I discuss their experiences later in this chapter.

The consequences of these attitudes towards respectability have an impact not only on young women, but on working mothers whose daughters will need to marry. Among my participants there were a few women from the lower middle class[51] who had daughters, and they said that they plan to leave work when their daughters become teenagers, to ensure their daughters' respectability. I spoke to Ms S, a supervisor with 19 years of work experience. She told me that she will leave work within a few years so as to be able to supervise her daughter's activities. Young daughters are not allowed to go out by themselves and mostly mothers accompany them – even at home they are not allowed to stay alone. It is the mothers who have to be conscious about the moral purity of their daughters and ensure that they fulfil their responsibility of bringing up a respectable daughter who can prove her purity on the day of her marriage (Fieldnotes 17/12/14).

50 In Sri Lanka, as a result of the three decade long war, the number of women in the population exceeds men, so it is said to be difficult to find partners for women. If a prospective groom does not want to marry a factory worker, the parents may insist their daughter give up her job, rather than seek another partner. This is because having an unmarried woman of 30-35 years of age is considered a disgrace for a family and it is believed that it negatively affects her younger sisters as well.

51 I discussed the concept of the lower middle classin the chapter on country context.

Another consequence of the attitude connecting women's value to respectability are the limitations on women's movements, especially for women of the middle and upper social classes. The social expectation is not to see women alone at night either at work or at social gatherings (Fernando and Cohen, 2014). The pressure on women to confine their careers to jobs that do not involve mingling, especially at night, was clearly explained by Ms R, the most powerful woman within the sample. She is aware of how men in households limit women's opportunities and social lives, and the career implications of this for women. She recognises that being a widow has allowed her more freedom to socialise with other business leaders than she would have had if she had needed to consider a husband's wishes or status. This freedom has been important to her participation in business networks. She points, in contrast, to the barriers her daughter faces as a married woman, despite her daughter being the managing director of the company.

> I think women have many roles to play, unlike men. So sometimes these are restricting them coming up. It is the culture. Even for my daughter (the MD) there are restrictions. I am a widow so I am an active member of a number of associations and move around freely but others cannot. Today a garment owner invited me and my daughter for his 50th birthday but she said she cannot… I think not that the husband said not to go but she must be feeling it is not right. Most of these are official functions where she can't take the family… She does not meet anybody else other than her buyers… It is a disadvantage. While I am here it is fine …but how can she survive in my absence (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

According to the above evidence it is young, unmarried women who sometimes challenge their parents and go against their wishes, seeking employment due to a lack of household resources and to gain some independence. Some middle class women also go against their parents' wishes and work in factories for personal reasons, such as gaining the freedom to meet their boyfriend. Respectability becomes especially critical at marriage so some women feel bound to give up their jobs. Even married women from the upper social class holding top managerial positions face restrictions due to norms of respectability. I suggest that the financial circumstances of families can outweigh parental concerns about respectability, and that it is easier for young unmarried women from the lower social class to go against their parents' wishes and enter employment. This is because the household is short of money and needs the financial contribution of the young, unmarried daughter. It is harder for married

women to go against their husbands' wishes because, as I discuss below, they are expected to obey their husbands' wishes even more than their parents'.

Dealing with the Expectations of Husbands

The constraints on working for married women come from their husbands' expectations. Husbands' object to their wives' working partly because of the lack of social respect for women working in factories and partly because it may prevent them from doing the domestic work. Married women face different challenges in dealing with the demands of their husbands depending on the earnings of their husbands and, in turn, their social class.

The only really legitimate reason for a married woman to go out to work is to increase the family income, and thus working class women are sometimes able to make a stronger case than middle class women. Some women had not worked before they were married but when they were married they had to work because their husbands could not support them. These women seem to accept the widespread social disparagement of working women's respectability so work hard to retain their good reputation. They express thanks to their husbands for giving them permission to work, implying that they respect his position as head of the household, and that he cares for them and will look out for them. However, some of these women are the main breadwinners because their husbands do not have a regular income. Ms Sri, a cleaner, said:

> I was a housewife and this is my first job. We had financial difficulties at home as my husband's income is not stable. Then I thought it is good if I also can work. I am working today because my husband gave me permission. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, there are women from a lower social class who have worked in better jobs than those they have now. Although they gave up their jobs on having children, they have now taken shop floor jobs because their husbands have no regular income. Ms Nan, a machinist, says that before her daughter was born she worked in the Katunayake FTZ as a clerk but,

> I joined this factory after about six years because the family has no regular income. My husband is a farmer and his income depends on the weather but my salary is stable (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Although shop floor women go to work because the income of their husband is not sufficient to cover the family expenses, their husbands are not usually prepared to share the housework, and expect their wives to be at home before dusk, both to maintain their respectability and to do the necessary evening household chores. Most of the men are not used to, and also not ready to do housework especially cooking and childcare. If the wife is late home from work, husbands have to attend to such work and they get angry because they have to do the 'women's work'. Thus women face pressures at work to stay late to reach their targets, and at the same time face difficulties in dealing with the demands of their husbands. Mr Ru, a manager, told me:

> Even for an emergency it is difficult to have night work. Women do not stay in the night. If they work till about 10 in the night. The following day their husbands call me and shout at me for keeping them till late (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

During the 'absent visit' which the counsellor at one factory makes to women who have not come to work, which I discussed in the chapter on Amma's Fashions, I came to know that some married women shop floor workers have had to give up their jobs to look after children. These women are the main breadwinners, as their husbands do not have a permanent income, but these men are not willing to take care of the children, expecting their wives to quit their jobs instead.

The only woman manager in the sample is an exception to the pattern of men's earnings affecting whether women go out to work. She was married to a tea planter and in Sri Lanka, planters are rich and from the upper social class. Her husband does not like her working, especially in the garment industry, as he thinks it is not suitable for his social status. Accordingly, she continually struggles to meet both the pressures of work and her husband's expectations. She was a merchandising manager and told me:

> My husband does not like me working. He earns well and my earnings are not important to him. I do not want to give up my job and he knows that… I somehow or the other find strategies to handle his demands and I go to his estate in a remote area during weekends. I finish my work during the week and the top management gave me permission to take Saturdays off[52] (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

52 This is the only woman manager. She lives in the parental home with her four year old daughter and goes to her husband's estate for the weekend. Those who own estates or even those who work as superintendents on estates are rich and from the upper social classes.

Interestingly most of the wives of the top-level men are graduates and were employed before having children. Three top level men from the upper and middle social classes said that after childbirth their wives 'voluntarily' gave up their jobs; some middle and supervisory level men said that after childbirth they asked their wives not to go to work, whether or not the wives wished to continue working. This again indicates the underlying attitude of the society that men are to go out and earn and women are to take care of the home. When men's earnings are high enough for the family to live comfortably, and when children are small and need the mother's attention, women of the elite class usually give up their jobs. Mr M, a General Manager of Merchandising said of his wife:

> She was a banker initially but with the birth of our daughter and me getting long hours of work in the office she volunteered and gave up the job. It made me have a comfortable life as well a well brought up daughter (Salary is Rs 300,000) (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married)

When a man's earnings are sufficient to support the family, women tend to follow their husbands' wishes (and perhaps their own) to give up work – although, as we have seen, this is not always the case. In contrast, when the man has lower earnings, insufficient for the life they wish to have, the woman goes out to work. Thus financial necessity at home is an important factor in decisions about whether women enter the labour force or not. The husbands of working women might like their wives to be at home but they have no alternative other than allowing women to work because they do not have sufficient earnings to support the family.

Family Networks and Employment

It needs to be said that families do not only hinder their members from working; they may also help them by facilitating employment. Indeed, it may be that parents do not always prevent their grown children from going out to work, but force them to work, or to take certain jobs. In this section I am going to look at a range of interventions by parents to their children's work, and responses by husbands to their wives.

The responses of families to the paid work decisions of their members are highly gendered. I found that support for men in finding jobs is willingly given by men and women in their family circle but women seem to gain support mainly from other women in their family. Mr Hem, a Cluster General Manager from the middle class, is

working in the garment industry due to family influence. He sees his 'choice' of career as a sacrifice for the sake of his family:

> I did not have an idea of joining this industry. I got selected to the Sri Lanka Air Force as an officer cadet. It was during the time of the civil war and it was a risk. The garment factory which I first entered was owned by a relative of mineand he encourged me(Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Mr J, an ironer, from the lower social class, has a similar story.

> Some of the relatives of my mother, an uncle, helped me to join the garment factory where I had worked before. Then only I joined here (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In contrast, only one lower level woman, Ms Shri, a supervisor, had got this kind of support from her family, from her two aunts, despite her father's opposition. This is an indication of family constraints as well as the use of family networks to promote women's employment.

> My father was angry that I am going to work and my father's elder sister explained to him the positive side of it but he was not convinced. Another aunt of mine introduced me to a woman working in the Katunayake FTZ and I went with her (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The parents of Ms R, the owner of Amma's Fashions, opposed her starting her business. So she is especially grateful for the support she received from her daughters after they grew up. She sees her daughter having sacrificed her own career ambitions, to practice medicine, and instead followed her mother into the business as managing director of the company at a time when Ms R was in dire need to bring someone into the company whom she could trust[53].

> I have very much to say about my second daughter (current MD of the company) because she could have done medicine at the Manipal University. Such an intelligent girl but when she saw that I am helpless she joined and supported me. She was the biggest support for me. She did a sacrifice (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

As well as family members helping each other to find work, women also depend on women family members for help with caring for their children. This is especially important for middle class or elite women, where working mothers depend on both

53Ms R has also founded a horticulture business, which is managed by her other, elder daughter and her husband. Ms R has brought her daughters into the family business, in contrast to Muhammad's Clothing, where the owner does not allow the women of the family to join the business.

paid care and their own mothers. For instance, Ms R's mother looked after her daughters when she began her business.

> After my husband's death me and my children stayed with my parents. I had a servant of course. I went abroad about 4 times a year for trade fairs but I knew that my mother could take care of the daughters (Sinhala/Buddhist/Widowed).

Ms Nav, Merchandising Manager, uses paid care for part of the day, but could not manage without her mother's help as well:

> My little daughter and I are staying with my parents as my husband is working in an estate in a remote area. Earlier we had a domestic aid but now we manage alone. I drop my daughter at the nursery and come to work. My mother picks her up and keeps till I return (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Family members not only support women by helping with childcare, but may also force them to take one job rather than another. This also shows how intertwined employment decisions are with family ties. In one instance, a mother forced her daughter to leave a respectable job in the service sector to take work in a garment factory where her husband had worked before his death. This was because while her husband worked there, he had taken a loan from the company which had not been paid back. The mother agreed with the management of the company that they could employ her daughter so as to pay back the loan, even without her daughter's consent. The company is deducting payments for the loan from the young woman's salary in monthly instalments. Ms Chathu, a Trainee Merchandiser, says:

> I was working in a different company when my father died suddenly. Then my mother wanted me to join this company. Later I came to know that the top management has discussed with the mother the fact that my father has obtained a loan from the company but has repaid only a little amount. The management has suggested that they can employee me and the loan can be deducted in installments from my salary. My mother had agreed but she did not tell that to me. However I had no choice. Now the company deducts Rs 10,000 a month from my salary. I still prefer the previous job as working conditions are far better in insurance companies (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

This indicates the effect of family and parental authority even on grown up children, especially women. However, some men's choices may also be constrained by their families. I mentioned one man who would have preferred to join the Air Force but whose family constrained his opportunity of making a career there. Another example was Mr Az, the general manager of Muhammed's Clothing, who felt forced to obey his grandmother.

> Me: Did you seek permission from your parents to join the company? A: No my grandmother forced me to join, I wasn't willing to. I went on my own and established something when I was very young, but my grandmother got angry and she said to my uncle (Mother's brother, the current chairman) to take me, so I had to obey my grandmother (Muslim/Married).

This example may illustrate the informal power of elder women in families, who may have made their own, informal, contribution to the business when it was getting off the ground, or may simply be looking out for the interests of the family as a whole. But in any case it seems that immediate family members, as well as the wider kin network, play an important role in work decisions, often constraining them in various ways. This seems to be most common for women, but is a wider practice. For the survival or the betterment of the family, parents or other family members often decide where young women and young men should (and should not) work. I am now going to look at how participation in paid work affects family relations.

The Effects of Gendered Work Participation on Family/Household Relations and Responsibilities

I will now move to a discussion of how participants' work participation affects their households, both in terms of structure and status. I look at how women's participation in employment effects household structure as well as patriarchal authority within the household. I begin this discussion with an analysis of the household structures present in my sample, and then I discuss the financial contribution of the participants and how their earnings affect patriarchal relations within the household and domestic gender divisions of labour.

Household Structure

A 'household' is a complicated term to define because it overlaps with 'family', and as Allan and Crow (1991: 5) say 'a household is a social grouping which typically shares a range of domestic activities in common such as having meals together, sleeping in the same dwelling as one another and sharing in a common household budgeting'. In my analysis a household is considered as a set of people who live together under one roof and share things in common. Household structure may be affected by patriarchal norms. Traditionally women were expected to marry before reaching 25, and brides were expected to be taken into the parental home of the groom, at least ideally (Herath, 2015). My analysis of the households of the 36 interviewees

reveal very different types of households and living arrangements than traditionally expected.

Table 8.1 below, lists the four different types of living arrangements found in my analysis of the households of the 36 participants. My discussion of these household types considers how living arrangements relate to the participants' positions in the organisational hierarchy of their factory, their gender, their marital status and their age.

Table 8.1 Household Types of the 36 Participants in this Study

Organisational Level	Gender	Household Type/Marital Status			
		Living in own house	Living in parental home	Hostel/Boarding	Single parent household
Owners and General Managers	W	1 Widowed (70 yrs)			
	M	7 Married (41-54 yrs)			
Middle management	W	1 Married (41yrs)	1 Married (32 yrs)		
	M	2 Married (29-65 yrs)			
Supervisory level	W	3 Married (37-42 yrs)	3 Unmarried (21-34 yrs)	1 Unmarried (26 yrs)	
	M	3 Married (34-54 yrs)	1 (22 yrs) Unmarried	1 Married (27 yrs)	
Shop floor workers	W	4 Married(41-47 yrs)	1 Unmarried (20 yrs)	2 1Unmarried 1Married (22-28 yrs)	1 Separated (40 yrs)
	M	2 Married (26-48 yrs)	1 Unmarried (22 yrs)	1 Unmarried (27 yrs)	
Total 36		23 – 9 women and 14 men (1 widowed woman/8 married women/14 married men)	7- 5 women and 2 men (1 married woman/4 unmarried women/2 unmarried men	5-3 women and 2 men (2 unmarried women/1 married woman/1 married man/1 unmarried man	1 – a woman (1 separated woman)

The majority of the participants, 23 individuals or 64%, live in their own house. Within this category are 14 men (nearly 78% of the men in the sample) and 9 women (50% of the women). All but one of these women and men are married, and they live in

various combinations: wife and husband; wife, husband and children; wife, husband, children and others[54]. The exception is one widow living on her own along with a paid domestic worker. Households typically contain between 2 to 6 people.

In the second category, 'living in parental home', there are more women than men and most of them are young and unmarried[55]. These 7 participants form 19% of the sample, and comprise of 5 women (4 unmarried, 1 married) and 2 unmarried men. This category also contains different combinations of people in each household, such as parents and children[56], parents or a parent with children and others. The only married woman in this category lives with her child in her parents' home. Her husband is a planter and lives on a tea estate in a remote area and she visits him every other weekend. An unmarried woman lives in the household with the highest number of people (8) living in it[57].

A few respondents, again more women than men, live in a 'hostel or boarding house' but have their permanent homes in other, distant locations. There are 5 individuals (14%) living in hostels or boarding houses, including 3 women (2 unmarried and 1 married) and 2 men (1 married and 1 unmarried). In company maintained hostels women live in dormitories (rooms of about 8x8 feet). About six to eight women share one dormitory, and also use shared toilets. In contrast, there are separate rooms with attached toilets in private boarding places. These women and men develop various patterns of visiting remote households. Married people seem to feel their obligations more, as married woman and men go home every weekend. Young women seem to feel more obligation to their parents, compared to one man, as the two unmarried women visit their parents once a month while the unmarried man rarely visits his parents. The final living arrangement involves living as a 'Single parent', with one woman participant, who is separated from her husband, living with her son and her mother in her own house.

54 Others consist of parents (both or lone), relatives such as individuals orthe nuclear families of relatives and/or paid domestic workers.

[55] Although the word 'unmarried' is used here I am aware of its general negative connotations, but it is the local term that is commonly used. In Sinhala married is 'Vivahaka' and unmarried is 'Avivahaka'.

56 Children consist of married(with children) as well as unmarried.

57The participant's mother, father, elder brother, his wife and child, the younger brother and younger sister.

Household Type, Earnings and Social Class

The household arrangements outlined above relate to participant's gender, social class and earnings. Men are over-represented in nuclear family households, whereas a higher proportion of women live in more complex households. This distribution is also affected by social class. The people who live in nuclear households are mostly men in the top and middle levels of the organisational hierarchy; they live with their wife and children, and often paid, domestic workers. Some of the shop floor employees who are married also live in nuclear family households, but others live with parents or other relatives in extended families. At lower levels of the workforce, many workers are younger, and not yet married, so they are more likely to be living either in parental homes which are mostly complex households or in company maintained hostels which are free of charge.

To put this another way, almost all of the top level men and one, the only, top level woman live in nuclear family households and fall under the category 'Living in own house'. These men have sufficient income to support an independent household and maintaining this socially desirable household also increases their social status. These participants mostly support wives at home who do not go out to work; they are the top personnel in the corporate sector of the country, with very high earnings and belong tothe elite class of Sri Lankan society. Women and men from the middle level of the organisation who might be seen asmiddle class also belong to this category. They too live with their spouse or their spouse and children. Similarly, women and men from the supervisory level who could be seen as lower middle class, also live with their spouse or their spouse and children in their own house. In contrast, shop floor employees who are low wage earners fromthe lower social class have comparatively insecure financial circumstances and some live in extended family households. Husbands in these families are unable to support a nuclear family household and the wives also work. They are adapting to relatively few resources and their living arrangements are a reflection of their struggle to make ends meet. In these households extended family members, especially women who do not work, attend to the household chores and sometimes care for the worker's child, and some extended

family members also share household expenses. Ms Pad, a machinist, lives in an extended family[58] and says that it is difficult to manage the expenses.

> I get about Rs 15000 a month and my husband gets about Rs 25000. House rent, electricity and water bills are high. We do not think about savings but manage the monthly expenses. I have a bit of a relief because my niece does the housework and sometimes they also buy rice and dry rations. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

At lower levels of the workforce young, unmarried women and men are more likely to be 'living in the parental home'. Thus two unmarried women and men between the ages of 20 and 27 years old live either with a parent or parent/s and siblings. An extended family is again found in the household of a lower level woman and this is the household with the highest number (8)[59] of people. The exception in this category is the sole woman manager, and her situation is unusual because she and her daughter live with her parents and two unmarried sisters in the parental home.

The living arrangement 'Hostel/Boarding' also correlates with earnings and social class. Some of the shop floor employees stay free of charge in company-maintained hostels. In contrast, supervisory level women and men stay in private boarding places as they can afford to pay the cost with their salaries. While being in the hostel women attend to a certain amount of domestic work – such as washing and cleaning, including cleaning the toilets – based on a roster created by the matron, and they have to follow the rules for the hostellers. In the men's hostel a cleaner is employed by the company, and there is no matron or rules for men hostellers. Similarly, when visiting their remote households on holidays, only women contribute to household work.

There is only one 'Single parent' household and it also reflects earnings and social class. It is another extended family household in which a woman from the lower social class is living with her son after the husband has left her, and she also takes care of her elderly, sick mother who lives with them.

Financial Contribution

Women's ability to make a financial contribution to a household is associated with men's levels of earnings; so that when men receive higher earnings and manage the

58 She lives with her spouse, child, a niece, the niece's husband and child.
59The participant, her mother, father, elder brother, his wife, their infant son, younger sister and younger brother.

family finances as sole breadwinners women tend to stay at home, and when men's earnings are low women are able to make a financial contribution – and it sometimes increases the social status of families in the lower social class. These women are very proud because they have better housing and other facilities and, importantly, they are better treated by their relatives and neighbours as their contribution is recognised and respected. This is contradictory because women are considered unrespectable because they work in the garment industry and yet gain social status due to their financial contribution to their families, which is made possible precisely by that unrespectable work. For instance Ms J, training line instructress, told me that after becoming employed she repaired the parental home which was in a very bad condition and helped her siblings' education; as a result the neighbours who did not accept them earlier now recognise them in a respectful manner. This illustrates my point that some lower class women have gained social status as an outcome of their employment in garment factories. Ms J said that her father spends his salary on alcohol. She spends hers on the education of her two younger siblings. She also told me that in the past their relatives laughed at their kitchen roof for having leaks all the time and she was ashamed, but now their house is far better than the houses of those relatives. The relatives and villagers now treat them well. So she feels really happy and proud (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married) (Fieldnotes 26/04/2015).

Similarly, Ms Ire a HR Executive is proud of her achievements and said:

> I am happy that I came for this job. I did a lot for the family and as a person also I have developed a lot. I am now recognized as a valuable person in the factory and I am in a position to help some to get a job and so on (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Moving beyond women contributing to increasing the social status of families by contributing financially to their households, there are gender differences in the way women and men contribute to the household finances. According to cross cultural research, household budgeting takes different forms and the responsibilities of women and men towards their households are also different (Hoodfar, 1997). It is argued that women's earned income is significant to the survival of many households (Dwyer and Bruce, 1988) and women's interests are focused more towards the betterment of children and the household than their husbands' (Hoodfar, 1997). Similarly, Pahl (1989) along with Dwyer and Bruce (1988) argues that women's money tends to be

spent on the children while husbands spend their money on themselves. Women don't have their own spending money, especially when money is tight. In this section on financial contribution I explore these issues looking, first, at women's financial contribution to families. Next, I discuss how women manage the housework, and see whether there are differences in domestic gender divisions of labour and if this has any relationship with the income and social class of the respondents.

I found 6 different patterns of financial contribution in my sample: 'sole breadwinner', 'main breadwinner', 'sharing with a spouse/parent', 'pay for parents and siblings', 'payment in kind' and 'personal expenses'. Following is a brief description of each category.

Sole Breadwinner – only one person (woman or a man) who earns an income for the family.

Main Breadwinner - women/men whose spouse has no stable daily/monthly incomeor earns a higher wage than their partner.

Sharing with a spouse/parent – Married women and men who share finances with their spouse, and young and unmarried women and men who share finances with their parents.

Pay for parents and siblings – Women and men who are married or unmarried and make regular payments to their parents or siblings.

Payment in kind –Women or men who contribute additional payments to their households, not as a regular payment but when they wish to.

Personal expenses – Women or men who do not pay for household expenses but spend some money for their own expenses.

Table 8.2 presents how these different financial contribution types relate to household type.

Table 8.2 The Financial Contributions of Participants towards their Households

Organisational Level	Gender	Household Type/Marital Status/Age/Financial Contribution			
		Living in own house	Living in parental home	Hostel/Boarding	Single parent household
Owners and general Managers	W	1 Widowed (70 yrs) ***Sole Breadwinner***			
	M	7 Married (41-54 yrs) 5 ***SoleBreadwinners/ 2 Share with Spouse***			
Middle management	W	1 Married (41yrs) ***Pay for Parents and Siblings***	1 Married (32 yrs) ***Share with Parents***		
	M	2 Married (29-65 yrs)***Sole Breadwinners***			
Supervisory level	W	3 Married (37-42 yrs) ***1 Pay for Parents and Siblings/1Personal Expenses/1 Share with Spouse***	3 Unmarried (21-34 yrs) ***1 Sole Breadwinner/2 Pay for Parents and Siblings***	1 Unmarried (26 yrs) ***Payment in Kind***	
	M	3 Married (34-54 yrs)***2 Sole Breadwinners/1 Share with Spouse***	1 (22 yrs) Unmarried/***Share with Parents***	1 Married (27 yrs) ***Share with Spouse***	
Shop floor workers	W	4 Married (41-47 yrs) ***2Main Breadwinners/ 2 Share with Spouse***	1 Unmarried (20 yrs)***Share with Parents***	2 1Unmarried (22-28 yrs) ***Share with Parents 1Married/ Personal Expenses***	1 Separated (40 yrs)***Sole Breadwinner***
	M	2(26 – 48yrs) Married/***1 Sole Breadwinner/1 Share with Spouse***	1(22 yrs) Unmarried/ ***Personal Expenses***	1(27 yrs) Unmarried/ ***Payment in Kind***	

The pattern of financial contribution shown in Table 8.2 partly reflects my sample which has more top level men and lower level women, and also indicates that top level personnel with higher earnings are capable of financing their households as sole breadwinners. We also can see that at all organisational levels men are more likely to be the sole breadwinners and live in their own house. In contrast, women and men at lower levels share the finances with their spouse and some women are the main breadwinners because their husbands don't earn much. Young and unmarried women and men from the shop floor live in more complicated households where they either pay for parents and siblings or share with the parents. I will now present each type of financial contribution in turn, and then discuss how women and men contribute to the household finances in different household types.

Sole Breadwinners

Most of the sole breadwinners are married men and all the sole breadwinner women and men live in their own house, one woman is a widow and the other woman is a single parent. The exception is the supervisory level unmarried woman who lives with her mother in the parental home. Out of the 10 men who are sole breadwinners 5 men are from the top level, 2 men each from the middle and supervisory levels and one from the shop floor level. This indicates that the top level personnel with higher earnings are capable of financing their households and even to have savings. Mr Sri, a Group Technical Manager is the sole breadwinner of the family.

> I earn nearly Rs 200,000 and I can cover the expenses of my family without much difficulty with what I get and I also save (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Even men from other levels in this category pay for all of household expenses and have savings as well. This is what a machinist, Mr Chathu says,

> I get about Rs 30,000 a month and I pay for all the household expenses. Recently I bought a three wheeler for family use. I also have savings (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In contrast, there are 5 women who are either sole or main breadwinners. With the exception of the MD of Amma's, they are from supervisory and shop floor levels. One of them, an unmarried woman living with her mother in the parental home, has become a 'sole bread winner' because her father has passed away, her brothers are living

separately and the mother is a housewife. Ms Dam is 34 years old and plans to marry soon. Ms Dam told me:

> My salary is Rs 25000 and I provide for the expenses at home as my mother is a housewife. My father passed away when I was small and the brothers are married and living in distant places. I am now 34 years old and I could not find a good partner for me. Recently I found him. We are planning to get married next year (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

The other woman sole breadwinner is a single parent 'living in her own house', for which she pays a monthly rent, and works on the shop floor. She encourages her son who is working to save. This is because she is determined that they either build a house or buy one as they now live in rented accommodation[60]. Thus, Ms Niro, a machinist told me:

> I earn about Rs 18000 and have to manage all the expenses with my earnings. Although my son is working I do not take any money from him but he gives some pocket money to my mother. I have asked him to save to buy a house or a land for us as we now have to pay rent. I put away Rs 5000 a month for a 'seettu' (Sinhala/Buddhist/Single Mother).

Main Breadwinners

Two shop floor women are main breadwinners. They are married and live in their own home. I described these women as main breadwinners because the earnings of their husbands are not stable and it is the women who pay for almost all of the household expenses. Their husbands, when they are earning, might be able to contribute to whatever expenses are occurring at the time but their income is not stable and the family finances are planned based on the earnings of the woman. Ms Shri is a cleaner and her husband has no regular income so she is the main breadwinner. Similarly, Ms Nan, a machinist, manages the family finances mainly with her salary and helps her husband, a farmer, to have an extra income; she also saves on a monthly basis.

> My husband is a farmer but we cannot rely on his income as it depends on the weather. So I manage with my salary and I earn about Rs 24000 and I pay about Rs 5000 per month for a 'seettu'[61]. Husband grows beetles and I help him on

60In Sri Lanka living in one's own home is a source of pride, irrespective of the social class. It is usual that middle and lower class people build their own house either on inherited land or on land they buy. Middle class people employ skilled workers for the construction under their supervision, and those at a lower level mostly use family labour and utilise the skilled labour of their relatives or neighbours at a lesser cost. Top level personnel either buy a house from a condominium in a developed town or pay a construction company to build a house.

61 An informal saving method. I will discuss it later under the section on savings.

> Sundays to take care of the plants and also to pluck leaves because we can get an income if the weather remains good (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Share with Spouse

Except for two top level men, most other participants who 'Share with the spouse' are from the supervisory and shop floor level and live in their own home. There is also a supervisory level man who lives in a private boarding house and goes home during the weekend. The top men who share with their spouse, when compared to other top level men who are sole breadwinners, are relatively young and recently constructed a house and bought a vehicle. Under these circumstances their wives also go out to work. Thus, the manager in the smallest company I studied, Rama's, though he is a top person in the organisational hierarchy, has earnings which are lower than the earnings of middle level personnel in the other two companies who 'share the expenses with a spouse'. Consequently the type of company a person is employed by also has implications for the gendering of household finances. Similarly, a general manager who is sharing with his spouse, has paid for parents and siblings before marriage (which I will discuss later) and is still paying for his parent's medical care. This indicates that the life stage of men and extended family responsibilities have implications for their financial contribution. Mr Hem, a Cluster General Manager, said:

> I cannot cover all the expenses only with my salary. I have to pay a housing loan and the leasing payment of the vehicle. My wife too pays for expenses especially for our daughter's educational needs. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

A middle level man while 'staying in a private boarding house' shares the household expenses with the spouse'. Mr Osh, a HR Executive, says:

> I stay in a private boarding and my expenses are high as I travel home every weekend. My wife is a teacher and we both share the expenses (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Lower level women and men who 'share the finances with a spouse' are of the view that it is extremely difficult for them to manage, even with two people's earnings. As a means to face the lack of financial and other resources amongst the lower class extended families live together. These findings suggest that except for a very few top level personnel, other women and men cannot manage with a single individual's earnings but need two sources of income to support a household. Ms Thi, a machinist, finds it difficult to manage the family finances.

> If I come daily I will get about Rs 15000 per month if not even less. My husband is a mechanic and he too pays for the expenses but it is extremely difficult as the cost of living is very high[62] (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Share with Parents

The category 'Share with the parents' is made up of young and unmarried women and men. These participants live either 'in parental home' or in 'company hostels', and I found two young, unmarried women and a man from the lower social class in this category. The exception is the married woman manager who lives with her parents as her husband lives in his estate in a remote area. All the women are of the view that parents do not expect financial support from them, but knowing the difficulties faced by their households women from the lower social class share with their parents. This indicates how young and unmarried women's income from employment in garment factories makes a significant contribution to family finances. Ms MS, a young and unmarried machinist, stays in the company hostel but shares finances with her parents. Similarly, Ms Madu, a 20 year old helper,[63] while living with her parents shares the household expenses.

> I earn about Rs 15000. My parents do not expect any money from me but monthly I give about Rs 2000[64] (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

A young unmarried man also is 'sharing with the parents' while 'living with the parents' because the family finances are very poor. While he makes a financial contribution to parents, he is worried that he is still unable to renovate his parent's home so as to allow the mother to live comfortably[65] in repayment for all his mother did for him especially, and for the family in general. Mr Rak, a Payroll Executive, says:

> My family has not much of an income. My father is a pensioner. My salary is Rs 33000 and I give my mother Rs 10,000 a month. My worry is that I could not renovate my parent's home which is very old now. I want to do it because I wish my mother can live in a comfortable home at least now for all the sacrifices she did to help me come up in life and also for what she did for the family (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

62 This woman lives with an extended family and apart from her husband and child, her niece, the niece's husband and child also lives with them.
63 Helpers mostly move the sewn garments along a machine line - from one machinist to the other.
64 She lives in the household with the most number of people (8).
65Indicating a different form of patriarchy, this man is entitled to the parental home because in Sri Lanka the tradition is that the parental home is given to the youngest son in the family, and in return he and his wife have to take care of the parents.

Paying for Parents and Siblings

Those who pay for parents and siblings are mostly women both married and unmarried and are from the lower social class. It is mostly married women without children 'living in own house' who are found to be 'paying for their parents and siblings'. Some of them started paying for parents and siblings at a very young age, some even at the age of 18 years, and continue to do so even after marriage. This shows women's financial responsibility in all stages of their life and their significant financial contribution to families. Women without children might be in a position to pay for their parents and siblings even after marriage before having expenses for children. One woman, a secretary, pays for her parents' medical expenses. Some of them are conscious about housing and they are proud that they built houses for their parents as well as for themselves. Ms Shri, a supervisor, told me:

> I started working when I was 18 years old and I helped my father to build a house for my parents with the money I earned while working in Katunayake. Then I built a house for me. I saved little by little. I earned all the money to put up the house that I am living now, by working in this organisation. My parents now live a better life as I helped them. Even after marriage I am helping my younger brother. He has a dairy farm but he started it recently and needs help. He is constructing a house as he is planning to get married soon. So I now help him financially (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

It is not only married women but also young and unmarried women from the lower social class who, while living with parents, 'pay for parents and siblings'. Apart from paying for parents, some women have helped their parents to construct a house for the family. This is in contrast to the young man who struggles to renovate the parental home which I discussed before. Ms Ire, a HR Executive, said:

> I earn Rs 40,000 a month. My father is old and we are a poor family. My sister too works in a garment factory but she gets a lower salary. I helped my father to build the house and also spend for my brother's education and now he is at the university. Even recently I bought him a laptop. So I will have to pay for him for about another two years. I am also reading for a BSc external degree and I pay for that as well. Up to now I have not saved any money (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Personal Expenses

It is mainly married women who are supported by their husbands and young, unmarried men who rely on their parents who are in this category. Thus Ms Lak, a storekeeper who is living in her own house with her husband, has some personal

expenses and saves the balance to complete the construction of their house. Similarly, a married woman, a machinist living in a company hostel, Ms D, is planning to leave the company in year and said:

> I save my salary as my husband wants to start a garment business at home. He spends for household expenses and I stay in the company hostel so my expenses are not high but only a few rupees for my personal expenses (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In contrast, a young, unmarried man living in the parental home has only personal expenses and saves the balance as his elder brother pays for the family expenses.This is because in Sri Lanka it is the norm that the elder son has the responsibility to take care of the family in the absence of the father. Mr San a 22 year old man said:

> I earn about Rs 18,000 and I save about Rs 15000 and keep the balance for my expenses. I do not have to spend for the family as my elder brother working in the Middle East sends us money. My father left my mother when we were young and she worked in the Middle East and brought us up. Now I live with my mother and younger brother (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Payment in Kind

There are only two participants who fall into this category, a man and a woman, both unmarried and living in a company hostel or private boarding. Although the woman does not make a regular financial contribution to the family finances she visits the family regularly and ensures that she buys things for the family members. This is what Ms T, a HR Executive, told me.

> I now earn Rs 30,000 I do not have to spend for the family. My mother gets a pension and she manages with that. My expenses are high as I stay in a private boarding and travel daily to work. Once a month I spend for travelling home as it is far away. So I spend about Rs 15000. But for sure when I go home I buy lot of things for my mother and brother mostly things to eat and even clothes (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

In contrast the man stays free of charge in the company hostel and does not visit his parents regularly. Even if he visits he is not interested in buying things for his parents but once a year he does so, as it is considered as a duty in Sri Lanka to buy gifts for parents during the Sinhala New Year. Thus Mr R, a machinist, said:

> My salary is Rs 21000. My parents do not ask for any money from me. Even if they ask it is very rare. I spend about Rs 4000 and save the balance. It is very rare that I go to see the parents, I mean about once in three months. I buy clothes

> for my parents only during the Sinhala New Year time (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

An indication of patterns of authority within households is how decisions are made. My findings show that some men discuss with their wives when making important family decisions and they are mostly the men who share finances with their wives. Mr Hem, a Cluster General Manager whose wife is working says:

> Before making important family decisions I always discuss it with my wife (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Similarly, the woman manager told me that she and her husband discuss with each other prior to making an important family decision. When men's earnings are low and women are the main breadwinner men not only discuss financial decisions with their wives but also listen to their wives' opinions; this indicates the significance of women's financial contributions for family decision-making. Ms Sri, a cleaner, told me:

> We always discuss before making decisions. I am happy because he listens to me and he is not a drunk or a person who goes for jackpots (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In contrast, and implying that sole breadwinner men who are top managers make family decisions by themselves, Mr Sri, Group Technical manager, said:

> It is me who makes such decisions… I am the one who makes financial decisions (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The above analysis shows that the majority of top level managers are sole bread winners and live in their own house, which means that they can form high status nuclear family-households. In contrast, women who are from the lower rungs of the organisations and the lower social class have more complicated living arrangements. Women's financial contribution is significant in lower social class families where married women and men share the costs with each other; young, unmarried women either pay for parents or share with parents, and one unmarried woman is a sole breadwinner. Women's financial contribution also affects decision-making. Thus top level men who are sole bread winners do not discuss with their wives but other men who share finances discuss with their wives, and when women are the main breadwinners men listen to the opinion of their wives. Thus employment in garment factories is an opportunity for women from the lower social class to contribute to

family finances by working in the lower rungs of organisations, to contribute to family finances and to become involved in making financial decisions at home. For men the industry provides opportunities to earn higher salaries in managerial positions and to be sole breadwinners in their households.

Savings

Here I consider savings because it is a form of financial contribution. In Sri Lanka there is a particular form of savings that is found amongst the lower social class, it is known as 'seettu'. This was a common form of saving amongst shop floor women. Young and unmarried women discussed money and jewelry as a form of savings, and one young man had a motorbike as his only form of saving. Married women and men talked about their houses and married men their vehicles as part of their savings. A married woman, for instance, saved to invest in a home-based business in the future. I am unable to present a comprehensive analysis because although I asked about earnings, expenses and savings, only a few participants, mostly from the lower organisational levels, discussed their savings while the top people mentioned that they save but did not discuss any details. Thus using the available information I developed the following analysis.

The most common savings type among shop floor women from the lower social class is 'seettu'[66] a traditional informal savings scheme. As would be expected, young and unmarried women from the lower social class living in the parental home and in the company hostel are the majority in this category and some women use this money to buy gold jewelry or save for their dowry; this reminds us how employers call these women 'temporary dowry seekers'. Ms MS a machinist living in a company hostel, has regular informal savings.

> I save using seettu with the friends in the hostel. I pay Rs 5000 monthly. I use this money to buy gold jewelry (showing me the earnings and the gold chain – happily with a smile). I am thinking of saving in a bank (Tamil/Christian/Unmarried).

66An informal traditional scheme where several individuals contribute a fixed sum of money monthly. The first collection goes to the organiser, and turns for others are decided by casting lots.It is a class practice and mostly women from lower social class have seettu with an individual contribution of Rs 5000-10000 but middle and even upper class business men have seettu of very high values.

Research has shown that young unmarried women from the lower social class work in garment factories for collecting dowry (Lynch, 2007) and I found the same. Following is what a helper Ms Madu, told me.

> Apart from the payment for my parents (Rs 2000), I go for seettu and save Rs 5000 a month. I am getting married next year. I have to have gold jewelry for my dowry. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

In contrast, one unmarried man, a machinist living in a company maintained hostel, does not pay for parents but he saves more than Rs 15000 a month. Similarly, while living in parental home and sharing the finances with parents (Rs 10000 a month) Mr Rak, a Payroll Executive, struggles to renovate the parental home but talks about his motorbike[67] as his 'only saving'.

> The one and only saving I have is my motorbike (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Housing and vehicles are also mentioned as savings by married participants mostly from the lower and middle social classes. Ms R the chairwoman constructed her own house about two decades ago, and one married woman Ms Lak a storekeeper, who has no children and 'living in own house', spends a small sum of money for 'personal expenses' and saves her salary to complete the construction of a house. Even top level men who share with their spouse spoke about houses or vehicles as savings, and Mr Hem, a cluster general manager pays the housing loan in instalments and according to Mr R, a manager:

> We are now constructing the house and also pay the leasing instalments of the vehicle. These are the savings that we have (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

Some married women save for investments and, as I discussed above, a woman machinist Ms D stays in a company hostel and has only personal expenses. She saves her salary to start a home-based garment business in a year's time with her husband.

Those who cannot save at all are women and one man from the lower class who live with extended families in their own houses.This reflects their straitened economic circumstances in that they only have enough money to meet daily living expenses. Ms Thi, a machinist, said:

67 In Sri Lanka men usually ride motorbikes and more recently women ride motor scooters. In Sri Lanka, these motor scooters are called 'pawul awul' – the translation of which is 'muddled family'.

> Although we both earn it is very difficult to save. House rent is very expensive. I cannot even think when we can build a house for us (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

With the limited information I have I suggest that young and unmarried women from the lower social class save for their dowries. Married women and men save for constructing houses and men also save to buy vehicles or bikes; one married woman saves to invest in a future family business. I have no information on other types of savings nor on the savings of top level men.

Managing Household Responsibilities

Apart from providing for family finances working women and men are involved in routine housework. "Housework" can be defined as the unpaid work done within a home to maintain the family and/or the members of that household (Coltrane, 2000). As discussed before, women of all social classes, especially married women, attend to certain household responsibilities such as cooking and childcare irrespective of their commitments at work. This is because the underlying cultural norms are that in the home it is the woman or the wife who is responsible for most household activities such as cooking, washing and childcare (Herath, 2015). Further, the social blame for family issues and family breakups is placed on women (Gunawardene, 2013). In contrast the research literature suggests that men's increased contribution to domestic work can be considered an outcome of women's employment in global factories(Bianchi *et al*. 2000; Coltrane 2000; Batalova and Cohen 2002). I will now look at the effects of women's and men's employment on the domestic gender division of labour.

All the married women rise very early. In the lower class households where women were the mainbreadwinners, husbands contribute to housework. Ms. Sri, is a cleaner and she is the sole breadwinner as her husband has no permanent income. She gets up around 4 a.m. and her husband helps her to do the housework, mainly cleaning but if necessary he helps with the cooking. She manages to come to work because of the help of her husband. Another woman, a 'main breadwinner' whose husband does the cooking, still gets up very early. Although both the husband and wife contribute to housework they are in a continuous struggle because of their low income, and also with the interest of both of them in educating the children. This the story of Ms Nan, a machinist.

> I get up at 4 a.m. and wake up the children to study. I prepare tea and I cook breakfast, wash the clothes and I come to work. My husband does farming at home so while working he cooks lunch. I go home around 6 and while I do cleaning my husband cooks dinner. Till about 10.30 p.m. in the night I help my children to do their homework. He is the one who goes for children's parents' days (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

In households in which respondents share the finances with their spouse I found men contributing to housework but to a lesser degree than in households where women were the breadwinners. Mr Hem, a Cluster General Manager, told me that he ensures that he does marketing even late in the night because his working wife attends to other housework. Ms Thi's (a machinist) husband helps her in cleaning and washing. Similarly, Ms Tha's husband, does some housework.

> I get up around 4.30 a.m. and cook. Husband does cleaning and ironing and take the children to school. Then we both come to work on his motorbike. In the evening we go together and do the shopping at the market on our way home. (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

The married woman machinist who stays in the company hostel and is saving her salary to start a family business does housework when she goes home during the weekend. The only chairwoman in the sample, Ms R, is a widow and a sole breadwinner. She employs a servant at home but recalls how she did all the housework and childcare in the early days of her career.

In contrast, all the men who are sole breadwinners and from the upper and middle social classes either do not do any housework or it is an optional/leisure activity for them. Some of them have domestic servants. Mr Az, a Managing Director, thinks that it is the duty of his wife to take care of the family.

> My household responsibility is only children and education, which is taken care of by my wife, and we have servants at home. I only speak to them here and there and find out what they are doing but she takes care of them. Me: Is she the one who makes your home life easy? A: yeah so that's her duty (Muslim/Married).

For some of them housework is optional and some do it for a change. This is because they have their wives attending to almost all the housework and facilitate to maintain their social status as elite class men representing the corporate sector of the country. Mr A, a Group HR manager, sometimes goes shopping at the market with his wife, and Mr Sri, a Group Technical Manager, does the cooking on Sundays for a change.

> The home front is managed by my wife. I have given that freedom to her. Me: What about the children's work? S: It is also handled by the wife, and marketing and shopping are done by them… I am not good at buying clothes for me… it is done by the wife…Sunday in the night I cook …mostly a soup or something like that …it also releases stress (Sinhala/Buddhist/Married).

There are some exceptions. Ms Dam, a supervisor, is a sole breadwinner and lives with her mother, she is similar to the male sole breadwinner in that she cooks for a change.

> I do not do any housework. My mother does everything. I take orders to sew bedsheets for hotels and during the weekend I do the sewing for an extra income. To have a change on Sundays I cook something new and also it is a rest for my mother (Sinhala/Buddhist/Unmarried).

Almost all the young, unmarried women and men have fewer responsibilities towards housework and it is not compulsory for them. This is not linked to class, financial contribution or household type but there is a gender difference. Most of the women volunteer to help with the domestic work but men do not. Ms T, a HR Executive, who stays in a private boarding house and makes a payment in kind to her parents voluntarily contributes to the domestic work when she visits them once a month even though her mother wants her to rest. Ms MS, a machinist who stays in a company hostel and shares the finances with her parents says:

> My mother is working in an estate as a labourer. She asks me not to do anything when I am at home. I am interested in learning how to cook and during weekends I try to cook (Tamil/Christian/Unmarried).

Accordingly, in the households where the women are the main breadwinners and from the lower social class and whose husbands have a lower or unstable income men 'share' the housework. This suggests that the inability of men to support their families, and women's employment and subsequent financial contribution to the household are associated with men contributing to domestic labour. Men who share the finances with their wives tend to contribute to housework but to a lesser degree than in households in which women are the main breadwinners; they tend to be found in the middle class. In contrast in households where men are sole breadwinners with higher income and they have their wives at home, men do not do any housework or some do certain work just for a change; these men are from the elite class or the upper middle class.

Conclusion

In this chapter I looked at how gendered family and household relations affect women's work participation, and similarly how gendered work participation affects

women and men's household relations and responsibilities. Overall I have been concerned with exploring how women's participation in employment affects patriarchal authority within the home, and how patriarchal authority within the home affects women's work participation. When looking at how family affects women's work participation, patriarchal controls are strongly related to women's work participation. Young, unmarried women challenge the patriarchal authority of parents by entering into employment in garment factories, and their families often gain social status due to their employment and financial contribution. This contradicts the negative attitudes about young women's lack of respectability if they work in the garment industry. Similarly, employment in garment factories enables married women to challenge the authority of their husbands particularly if their husband's authority is already reduced by a lack of earnings. These women participate in making financial decisions in families, and when women are the main breadwinner men listen to the opinion of their wives. For men, garment factories offer managerial jobs and they earn enough to support their families in accordance with patriarchal norms. It is also evident that when compared to households where men have higher earnings, domestic divisions of labour are different in households where men's earnings are lower and women are working. Thus men's earning power reinforces patriarchal authority within households. When men have higher earnings patriarchal norms are reproduced, their wives stay at home even if they worked before marriage and they either do not do any housework or if they do it is optional. In contrast, when men have lesser earning power their patriarchal authority is undermined, women go out to work and men contribute to the housework. In conclusion it can be stated that women's employment in garment factories enables them to have an independent source of income and to contribute to household finances. This can lead to higher family status, men's participation in domestic work and a reduction of the stigma associated with working in the garment industry. It can also challenge patriarchal authority within households.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis has examined women's employment in the garment production industry in Sri Lanka, concentrating on how three case study companies legitimate the exploitation of women's labour and the mechanisms through which social inequalities in the factory are reproduced. In this chapter my objective is to summarise the main findings of the study in relation to the research questions. I am organising this chapter around the research questions, in order to highlight the main findings and end with a discussion of my contribution to existing knowledge about the position of women in the garment production industry in Sri Lanka, including the limitations of this study.

Research Questions and Main Findings

My study is mainly focussed on the experiences of women in relation to inequalities at work and I ask:

1. What inequality regimes characterise garment-producing factories in Sri Lanka?

(i) What are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?

(ii) What other factors affect the reproduction of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?

I also ask how much change has taken place in women's lives as a result of working in garment factories in Sri Lanka:

2. Is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan garment factories?

To answer the above questions I adopted a multiple case study methodology, choosing three different case study companies, and conducted 36 in-depth interviews with 18 women and 18 men representing, in each company, the top, middle, supervisory and shop floor levels of the organisational hierarchy. I supported the interview data with my own extensive observations over the 60 days I spent in each factory. My analysis

is based on empirical data from transcripts of the interviews and observations during fieldwork. In addressing the research questions I analysed my data on how workers are managed, on workplace hierarchies, and ceremonial rituals as well as everyday interactions at work. I used the data to characterise the implicit inequality regime existing at each factory. I analysed what participants told me in the interviews about their households and household finances to understand the links between family situations and work situations. Since participants come from all levels of the three organisations, the implications of women's employment were diverse.

I now summarise my findings, approaching each research question in turn.

What inequality regimes characterise garment-producing factories in Sri Lanka?

The first research question is, 'what inequality regimes characterise garment-producing factories in Sri Lanka?'What I find most striking is the existence of substantial differences in how the three factories are run. The different 'inequality regimes', which I detail below, reflect differences in location, ownership, company size, product market, and the personality of factory owners.

Each of the case studies is characterised by a different inequality regime. I call Muhammad's Clothing a 'despotic' regime, Amma's Fashions a 'maternalistic' regime and Rama's Shirts a 'pragmatic' regime, based on my data about how the company is managed, how workers are treated, and how inequalities are perpetuated. Muhammad's Clothing's inequality regime displays similarities to what Burawoy (1983) identifies as a despotic regime, where workers' productive labour is exploited mostly through sheer coercion, abusive treatment and workers' lack of alternative employment. The subordination of employees to management is based on their dependence on the employer for wages, with little possibility of modification. Hence the main and indeed only form of agency available to workers is to leave their jobs. At Muhammad's, every feature of factory life, including highly unequal earnings, informal interactions, rituals and ceremonies, forms of address, the use of space, furniture, the eating arrangements and even the toilet facilities legitimate the unequal status of people in the factory in relation to each other. Within Muhammad's Clothing inequalities such as gender, class, ethnicity, religion and sexuality that are present in

the wider society are re-emphasized and reproduced. However the other two case studies show that it is possible to modify despotism in particular ways.

The ‘maternalistic’ inequality regime at Amma’s Fashions is more feminised, and modeled on maternal care: one of the few forms of power available to women. The chairwoman’s personal kindness is highlighted by employees, especially her willingness to help with healthcare costs and medical advice. These acts by the chairwoman are crucial to workers’ standards of life due to high poverty levels prevailing in the country, especially in rural areas, and the need for personal contacts to obtain access to public medical services. These acts are effective due to the chairwoman’s ability to get ‘closer’ to women than a male manager could. As a successful company, salaries and wages at Amma’s are higher than in many other factories, there are more comfortable physical facilities, better on-site food, and healthcare is available indicating that employee well-being is treated more generously than at the other two factories. The company supports women in resolving family issues and being able to continue working despite family circumstances; it challenges patriarchal authority at home and moderates gender inequality in the workplace. Although status and class differences within the workplace are marked by the disparities in the provision of physical facilities, different forms of address and in rituals and ceremonies, the chairwoman’s ‘kindness’ masks the power relations between the employer and employee, stifling any potential challenge to the class and status hierarchy.

At Rama’s pragmatism is visible in many aspects, such as hiring through personal contacts, using shadowing for training, assigning multiple job roles to employees and even low capital investment, leading to poor and unsafe physical facilities. Employees’ wages and salaries are not as good as at the other two case study firms. The firm does not have the scope or the interest to prioritise ideologically defined beliefs about people’s suitability for jobs based on their gender, class and ethnic identities, so the company promotes men to be machinists and allows some blurring of gender inequalities. The hierarchy in the factory is quite flat, as except for the ownerother staff perform all tasks together. Compared to the other two factories there are very few rituals and ceremonies in which employees show their respect to owners

and managers. All this tends to blur somewhat the steepness and explicitness of social inequalities.

Observing how each factory obtains its workforce, Muhammad's and Rama's are similar to a certain extent because personal contacts play a significant role in both organisations. However, at Muhammad's all the top managers are family members, and even the other managers are accountable to them. None the less I found employees would occasionally challenge despotic practices. Some women workers complain vocally to HR, but the main form of agency they employ is leaving. Indeed, even the few managers who tried to treat workers in their teams a bit better have left the company since I completed the fieldwork. Rama's is pragmatic in recruiting through personal contacts, and seems to develop a friendly workforce in which workers help each other out. In contrast, Amma's Fashions is run more formally and in hiring adopts a range of selection tools, such as interviews and competency tests.

How each factory manages its employees is clearly differentiated. The despotic characteristics of Muhammad's include harsh measures to maintain output. Employees at all levels experience pressure to meet deadlines, including abusive shouting. Each level passes blame down to the next, without accepting their own responsibility. Thus women, the majority at the lowest level, have to absorb the accumulated pressure without any means to object. Heated arguments, crying, swearing and leaving are frequent.

In contrast, managing employees at Amma's takes a different form than at Muhammad's. As a producer of high-quality fashion garments Amma's Fashions only accept orders they can supply on time, rather than obtaining huge orders where they cannot ensure quality. When compared to Muhammad's there is relatively little shouting on the shop floor, and managers also absorb the pressure of meeting targets without passing the blame to the lower level. Power is exercised maternalistically, like a mother resolving conflicts between children and as a consequence relations at work are harmonious.

Rama's was the smallest company I studied, and as a producer for the local market their targets are not as tight as in the other companies serving foreign markets. As a result, shouting at workers is also not as prominent as at Muhammad's, although it

still occurs, and it is the supervisor who raises her voice: it is rare that the manager shouts. Getting workers to do multiple job roles is significant and it is used as a means to address labour shortages. Thus at Rama's there is a more relaxed and calm atmosphere than at Muhammed's, but attendance and punctuality can be sources of contention.

In terms of everyday interaction, in the despotic regime disrespectful behaviour is significant. It seems to be taken for granted that managers can shout at the employees at all levels, and at will, with no comeback from the employees. It is not possible to challenge the actions of managers later because there are no records or checks on how managers' behave. Top management act towards workers and other managers with total indifference to their feelings, and seemingly without any care as to whether workers' feelings or dignity matter at all. Senior managers interfere with workers' dress and hair style, matters outside of production but which they see as questions of respect in relation to their betters. Employee comments indicated dissatisfaction with the disrespectful behaviour of managers.

In contrast, employees are happy with the relations at Amma's and employees respect and pay gratitude to the management. Managers at Amma's take care to find out why workers are not coming to work, which suggests that they see existing workers as valuable and worth investing in. Similarly, at Rama's there is an atmosphere of relaxed but respectful cooperation between employees at all levels of the factory.

A common characteristic in all three factories is that employees on the shop floor who are mostly women are called 'children' which is a widespread practice within the industry. Not only is it disrespectful to call adults 'children', it avoids granting them the status of workers or employees. However, this practice is taken for granted by the employees and they themselves refer to themselves or each other as children.

At Muhammad's it is the coercion and the absolute power of the top management that gains employee compliance, at least so long as employees stay in their jobs. Crying, cursing and talking back to supervisors and managers are common, andthe only effective, and ultimate, form of resistance open to women is to leave. At Amma's the kindness of the chairwoman develops a feeling of indebtedness to the company and employees are grateful because they practice the Sri Lankan cultural and religious

value *Calaguna Selakeema,* of being grateful. Rama's workforce has become a niche for older employees, who are grateful to the factory for keeping them in work despite their age. This contributes to their attachment to their jobs, helping to sustain their consent to the inequality regime, despite inadequate working conditions.

Exploitation is clearly visible at Muhammad's where employees work in poor and unsafe working conditions. The company had a trade union in the past but management has dismantled it. The welfare society, a form of joint consultative council the Board of Industry requires, exists but does not seem to provide employees with any real voice. Similarly, at Rama's it is only the owner and the manager who know that the factory is likely to be relocated in the near future, and that the jobs of their employees are at a risk. There is no labour union nor a consultative council. At Amma's there is only a joint consultative council as the interface between management and workers. The workers commented that there are no issues to be discussed in the joint consultative committee as the company resolves any issues without delay. The chairwoman's 'kindness' masks the power relations between employer and employee. The chairwoman's kindness deepens the dependence of the employees on their employer in many ways, including during times of family crises or exceptional financial need creating employees who feel indebted to their employer.

What are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in the garment factories in Sri Lanka?

With the three organisations characterised by three different inequality regimes I will now look at how these inequality regimes are reproduced, answering the research question: 'what are the organisational practices and processes that contribute to the creation/recreation of inequalities in the garment factories in Sri Lanka?' I do this by structuring this discussion according to the characteristics of inequality regimes that Acker (2006) identified: the bases of inequality, organising processes, and the legitimacy of inequality and control. These characteristics take different forms, and occur in varying degrees in the three inequality regimes.

Bases of Inequality

There are fairly similar bases of inequality in the three factories, reflecting the wider Sri Lankan social structure. Gender is found to be very significant, and gendered hierarchies occur in all three factories, with the partial exception of Amma's, where

two women hold the topmost positions. However, all the organisations are characterised by a gendered division of labour, with women and men distributed in different jobs. Men work mostly as managers, and on the shop floor as cutters, ironers, mechanics and labourers. Women serve in clerical and secretarial jobs in the head offices or work as machinists, helpers and packers on the shop floor. Shop floor workers, who are mostly women, are addressed as children, which I discuss more later. Gender is also almost completely integrated with class, especially in the large organisations, since top managers are men from the elite or the middle class while shop floor employees are mostly women from the lower social class. Although it might be expected that class processes in the wider society are reflected in the hierarchical positions existing within organisations this may be less true in small privately owned businesses. This is the case for the two large organisations in my study but, Rama's, the smallest company, is owned by a man of modest resources who is not from the elite class – although in relation to his employees he has class power. Similarly, the only manager at Rama's earns half the salary of a manager in the two big companies. Women from the lower social class are on the shop floor as machinists and helpers; women serving in supervisory and clerical jobs are either from the middle class or lower middle class, and some are from the lower class and now hold a lower middle class job; the only woman manager is from the middle class.

'Ethnicity' and 'religion' are also bases of inequality in all three organisations. Within the despotic regime of Muhammad's Sinhala men do not get the opportunity to be promoted to top management, as these positions are held only by Muslim men who are family members. 'Religion' becomes a base of inequality and leads to discriminatory practices. Muhammad's does not respect legal holidays, and makes it compulsory to work on *poya* days, a religiously important day for Sinhala Buddhists.

At Amma's Fashions Sinhala Buddhist loyalties are paramount but taken for granted. Amma's Fashions conforms to the usual hierarchy among ethnicities and religions in Sri Lanka. The owner does not question her right to prioritise Buddhist holidays or ethics. In contrast, at the other two factories the ethnicity of the owners does not follow the usual Sri Lankan hierarchy so they have to manage that dissonance. For instance Muhammad's makes an effort to stay on good terms with the local Buddhist temple in case it should need its protection in future. At Rama's the owner is a Tamil Hindu

man, but he gives equal weight to Sinhala Buddhist customs and rituals rather than only Tamil and Hindu customs and rituals.

According to my findings sexuality is a base of inequality, and it intersects with gender and class. Thus at Muhammad's there are strict controls on lower class (shop floor workers) women's sexuality and in women's hostels, in which women from the lower social class stay free of charge. The matrons of women's hostels are expected to ensure that women do not develop sexual relationships but there is no such control in men's hostels. Similarly, at Muhammad's women, especially newcomers, are subject to sexual joking, and there are complaints made by shop floor women of sexual harassment. I did not find evidence of attempts to control the sexuality of women employees or sexual harassment in the other two factories. One exception is not allowing women to perform Hindu rituals at all times at Rama's, because menstruation is considered unclean in Hinduism.

'Age' is also a basis for inequality. At Muhammad's and Amma's the majority of the shop floor workers are young, unmarried women between the ages of 17 and 25 years. Rama's finds it difficult to retain younger women, yet the company manages with a set of older employees (35 to 55 years) whose capabilities are sufficient to serve the local market. The company has become a niche employer for these older employees. The garment industry, especially in export oriented factories, expect young and unmarried women to work on the shop floor and this expectation discriminates against older women.

Shape and Degree of Inequality

The steepest hierarchies are found at Muhammad's and at Amma's, with a more even level hierarchy at Rama's than in the other two companies. At Muhammad's, male family members who own and manage the company wield more power than anyone else. At Muhammad's Clothing and Amma's Fashions there are many levels in the hierarchy between the top managers and the shop floor workers. In contrast Rama's is so small, and the management structure so truncated that the hierarchy is quite flat, with only one manager and a supervisor between the owner and the women workers (although there are other, male, manual workers – the cutter and mechanic – who take

on occasional semi-managerial roles, like taking cheques to the bank). The owner keeps his distance with the shop floor women but the others work in harmony.

The steepness of each organisation's hierarchy is also reflected in salary and wage disparities, which are high at Muhammed's and Amma's, and lower at Rama's. Top managers at Muhammad's and Amma's earn 30 and 29 times, respectively, more than the lowest paid in those companies, but at Rama's the difference is much less, as the manager earns only about 5 times that of the lowest paid employee. However, workers earn more at Amma's. The lowest salary at Muhammad's and Rama's is the National Minimum Wage of Rs 10,000 per month, while at Amma's it is Rs 12,000.The steepness of the hierarchy reflects social class inequalities because the top personnel, especially in large organisations, are from the elite class while shop floor employees are from the lower social class and as a result wage differences and power differences mirror the wider society.

My findings confirm that there is both vertical and horizontal segregation (Bradley, 1989) based on gender and class. When looking at the gendered hierarchy a clear gender division of labour can be identified in all three organisations, which corresponds with employees' social class. Thus in the three organisations men from the upper social class are the owners and top managers. The exception is the factory owned by an upper class woman, in which the woman is the chairwoman and her daughter is the managing director. Only one woman from the middle class works as a manager at Muhammad's Clothing. All the other women work either in the supervisory level or on the shop floor, and the majority on the shop floor are from the lower social class. Horizontal segregation is found because women are in jobs such as clerical and secretarial work or work on the shop floor work as supervisors, machinists and helpers, whereas men are mainly managers and on the shop floor men work as ironers, cutters, mechanics and labourers.

In the two companies that are part of the global supply chain, Amma's maternalistic inequality regime has higher salaries across the hierarchy than at Muhammad's, and even bonus and incentives are more at Amma's. This may be partly due to the attitude of the chairwoman towards employees but it also arises because it is necessary for Amma's to retain skilled machinists due to the complicated patterns of their products and the use of fine fabrics. Further, being in a rural area with many garment factories

Amma's competes with other factories for skilled labour. Rama's pays the lowest salaries and, unlike the other case study organisations, has no extra incentives apart from an annual bonus. This is probably because meeting the deadlines of local buyers is easier than meeting those of the foreign buyers and less pressure needs to be exerted on workers to meet production targets.

Power differences within the organisations are related to class and reflected in the hierarchy; the owners have considerable power, which is highlighted in my findings. The most extreme case is found at Muhammad's where, in the despotic inequality regime, top positions are reserved for Muslim men from the elite family that owns the firm; this ensures that the power of family members cannot be challenged by anyone at any level of the company hierarchy. Similarly, reflecting the absolute power of male family members, employees can also be fired at the whim of senior management. The absence of labour unions means that there is no collective resistance to this power and the welfare society, which is the interface between the workers and managers, is controlled by management. I highlighted how management at Muhammad's makes decisions, such as to work on *poya* days, and uses welfare meetings to communicate these decisions. In the other two factories a despotic regime is modified. At Amma's this is because of the chairwoman's maternalistic attitude towards employees and the necessity to retain skilled workers who can produce fashion garments using delicate materials and, at Rama's, because of the need to retain an older workforce due to the high labour turnover of young women. Amma's has a Joint Consultative Committee as the interface between employers and workers but Rama's has none. The management style of women can sometimes be an issue and research shows that women who try to use power in the same way as men can be categorised as 'witches' or 'bitches' (Wacjman, 1998) or are seen as unfeminine (Cockburn, 1991). The chairwoman at Amma's avoids this by developing a management style which is distinctively feminine. Thus in the maternalistic inequality regime at Amma's the severity of power differences are not highlighted due to the 'kindness' of the chairwoman and her daughter; this masks the power relations between the employer and employee. In contrast, within the pragmatic regime at Rama's power difference are less apparent due to informality at work. This does not, however, mean that they are not present, and there is a clear demarcation of who is expected to direct activities and who is expected to follow orders. For example the manager is strict on punctuality,

employees are only able to get leave with the manager's permission and the owner has no contact with the women on the shop floor.

Organising Processes

'Organising the general requirements of work' refers to how work is organised within organisations, and how it varies between organisations and organisational levels within a single company. According to my findings women are to be found in the lower positions, and the majority are on the shop floor. Managers, who are mostly men, pointed out that women cannot take on managerial positions because these positions require working till late, at night, during weekends and travelling; women cannot do these things because they have family responsibilities. Thus women's obligations outside work are used to legitimate a gendered organisation of work and becomes significant in maintaining gender inequality in organisations, and the distribution of women and men in organisational class hierarchies (Bradley, 1989; Charles, 1993; Adkins, 1995; Crompton, 1997). Evidence suggests that this gender division of labour is justified by the managers mainly with reference to: women's domestic obligations, their inability to work nights or meet deadlines, the physical strength of men, and women's superior ability to work methodically. Thus women can meet the demands of an industry that has critical daily targets only when they are young and unmarried or when they have children who are grown up. Managers are of the view that women enter the industry when they are very young and unmarried but leave at the point of marriage or afterwards when they have children. It is common that some managers call these young women 'temporary dowry seekers'.

'Recruitment and hiring' supposedly enable management to find the best worker for a particular job but these processes result in inequalities. Hiring has been shown to be influenced by perceptions of appropriate bodies that are gendered and racialized, or based on ethnicity (Elias, 2004). My findings provide evidence of the effect of gender in recruitment and how images of appropriately gendered bodies shape who is hired. Thus managers place women in positions that need less physical strength with low salaries; they also believe that women pay more attention to their work than men and are capable of doing work in a more methodical manner. They are also seen as less aggressive in relations at work than men. This affects the type of jobs they are recruited for. In contrast managers select men for jobs that need physical strength and pay them

more. Male bodies in managerial positions enjoy toilets with commodes, rooms with air conditioning, elegant furniture and even people to serve them meals in the canteen at Muhammad's. In contrast, shop floor women have squatting pans and on some of the upper floors of Muhammad's, where women are the majority, there are no toilets at all. Hiring through social networks, which I found occurs at Muhammad's and Rama's, is another way of maintaining gender and racial inequalities. At Muhammad's managers use personal contacts to recruit workers with the intention of developing an unquestioning workforce who accept despotic practices. At Rama's hiring through personal contacts is also used, not so much to maintain inequalities but as a pragmatic practice to save time spent on selection as there is only one manager. Further, this factory mostly depends on older workers and hiring through personal contacts is a way of maintaining a friendly and loyal workforce. At Amma's more formal recruitment methods are used.

Wage setting and supervisory practices are also class practices through which hierarchy is created and maintained. According to my findings, in all three factories wage setting creates and maintains the hierarchy to different degrees and reflects the social class and gender hierarchy found in the wider society. Informal interactions between supervisors and subordinates also influence the reproduction of inequalities but in a more subtle way. For instance, at Muhammad's a manager promoted one of his relatives without any formal process and, at Rama's, some of the women commented that the woman supervisor gives preferential treatments to her favourites. In this way, informal practices reinforce inequalities within the workforce.

My findings show that informal interactions reproduce gender, class, ethnic and religious inequalities. At Muhammad's, managers are shown respect by women who stand up when a manager arrives and only sit when the manager is seated. Women also show respect to managers in annual ceremonies where Sinhala Buddhist women bow and some even touch the managers' feet. In contrast Sinhala Catholic women shake hands with the managers. In these ceremonies women do most of the arrangements, such as serving food to the men before eating themselves. Shop floor employees eat at their own table but women from the head office eat at the same table as the men. These practices reinforce class and gender differences. Shouting at women for achieving targets is also significant because it is mostly upper class men who shout

at shop floor women in an abusive way. As a result of this harsh treatment shop floor women leave Muhammad's. Some of the supervisory level women take the view that shouting can be minimised by handling issues differently which they try to do but men are not willing to listen to their opinions. Men's behaviour is exemplified by the group HR manager who pulled the hair of a young man, a pay roll executive, in my presence simply because his hair was long and ordered him to get a haircut. The same manager shouted at a woman, the master trainer of the Ladder training program, for not wearing a saree when attending Ladder activities. This sort of behaviour was common at Muhammad's.

At Amma's these informal processes take a different form. Women show their respect to the chairwoman by standing when she enters their work space, they also do this when a manager appears. However, unlike at Muhammad's, employees feel free to smile and talk to the owners, and I have examples of the Managing Director cracking jokes with elderly men on the shop floor. At Amma's canteen, facilities are the same for everyone but in annual ceremonies the chairwoman and other managers are shown respect by their employees who bow and some even touch the feet of the managers. Similar to Muhammad's, women serve the chairwoman and the managers in ceremonies but everyone, including shop floor women, eat at the same table. At Rama's the owner never comes to the shop floor so I was unable to observe how the workers responded to his presence; he works in his office while he is in the factory and the women never talk to him but discuss matters with the manager or the supervisor. All the employees do multiple job roles and even the manager helps the ironers to carry heavy cartons. In contrast, women take turns to prepare tea twice a day, and they serve tea to the owner and manager before they have their own tea. Thus informal practices blur hierarchies and inequalities.

The Legitimacy and Visibility of Inequalities

Visible inequalities take different forms in the three case study organisations. They are most apparent in the physical design of the buildings and forms of address which I have already discussed, but there are also visible differences in the dress requirements of women and men at different levels of the organisations. The male managers, for instance, mostly wear smart casual clothes (trousers, a long sleeved shirt and tie) while shop floor women wear either a skirt (knee level) or jeans and a blouse.

In contrast, Amma's chairwoman wears elegant sarees especially for functions while her daughter wears jeans and a top, and women on the shop floor wear knee level skirts) or jeans and a blouse. There is an awareness of some inequalities. At Muhammad's, Sinhala Buddhist employees highlight that they are discriminated against by not being given the *poya* holiday and also complained that managers treat employees differently. In addition, they were critical of the lack of transparency and nepotism involved in promotions. Employees at the other two companies did not make any comments about inequality, and I suggest that this is because it is taken for granted and legitimised.

In all three organisations inequalities are legitimated by means of hierarchies and wages that reflect the position of employees in the hierarchy. Women are at the lower rungs with lower wages and managers, especially at Muhammad's, assume that women can meet the demands of production only when they are young and unmarried or when they have children who are grown up. These assumptions legitimate gender inequalities because women are at the lower rungs with low salaries. Similarly, forms of address legitimise inequality in all three factories but to different degrees. Most managers are men from the elite or middle social class, and are called 'sir' by both workers and lower level managerial staff. At Amma's the chairwoman is addressed as 'Madam', the MD and women executives as 'Miss' and at Rama's the woman supervisor is also addressed as 'Miss'. Following common practice in the industry which has its origin in the handloom industry, shop floor level employees, including male machinists, are referred to as 'children' ('lamai' in Sinhala). These forms of address normalise inequalities.

The physical design and arrangement of rooms and facilities also mark gender and class distinctions, and although every factory provides a certain level of facilities to their employees, the range of provision available varies according to an individual's position in the hierarchy, and this variation is more extreme in some organisations than others. At Muhammad's, for instance status differences are most clearly marked with the facilities enjoyed by managers being vastly superior to those available to shop floor workers. Shop floor employees have a separate canteen with fewer facilities than the other canteen for the other employees (within which the owners have a special table and are served food by the canteen staff), and toilets, air conditioning and furniture

also highlight these status differences. At Amma's everyone shares the same canteen, and even though managers' rooms have air-conditioning and modern furniture, shop floor employees also work under good conditions such as good ventilation and toilet facilities. At Rama's the air conditioning, physical space and furniture for the owner are of a higher quality than what the shop floor employees have access to; the premises are too warm for them and around 40 employees use only one, unclean toilet.

Training can also legitimate inequalities. At Muhammad's, for instance, the only training program legitimises gender and class inequality. While Acker and other feminist investigators in the global North have investigated the effects of equal opportunity and other change programs, in Sri Lanka change programs arise through ethical initiatives promoted by international buyers. The Ladder training program at Muhammad's is a compliance requirement of a leading international buyer. It is provided for shop floor women workers only, and its objective is women's emancipation; in practice it reproduces women's subordination as I discussed in chapter five. Thus even the involvement of international buyers has not, in this case, resulted in a change in women's lives but serves to reproduce and legitimise gender and class inequalities.

My findings also highlight that in all three organisations there are many rituals and ceremonies that mark the working day and the calendar year; practices which are similar in nature and symbolise clear gender and class differences. The most common rituals involve reciting precepts, reading pledges and singing anthems all of which are taken for granted aspects of Sri Lankan culture. The size of the organisation is significant in deciding the nature of rituals, with most big companies engaging in rituals to encourage their employees to identify with the company and the company's interests. In my study Muhammad's and Amma's carry out many rituals while Rama's, the smallest and only factory of the company, have only one collective ritual. This may be because Rama's being such a small company can rely on informal relations to obtain consent and respect. In the bigger factories the less the top people know the bottom people, the more they need a mechanism for gaining consent.

Participation in these routines reflects the position of employees in the hierarchy. In my three case study organisations top level personnel do not always participate in the routines and rituals of the organisation, but lower level employees are required to. For

example I did not come across owners participating in daily rituals and/or anthem singing in any of the organisations. Similarly, reporting to daily work is flexible for the owners and managers but the other employees in all three organisations have to arrive exactly on time, and being late leads to deductions from their daily pay. Even certain specified behaviours mark status differences. In all three organisations: employees, for instance, remove their shoes on entering the factory but the reasons for this requirement differ. At Rama's and Amma's this is done to ensure that the factory floor is clean but at Muhammad's the chairman claims to see the factory as a holy place and gets angry when people wear shoes while at work. In contrast, employees at Muhammad's and Amma's head offices are not required to remove their shoes while working. This is another example of the ways in which inequalities are inscribed on the bodies of workers and managers.

Besides the daily rituals there are annual ceremonies in all three factories which mark gender and class differences and require workers, supervisors and lower level managers to show respect to owners and managers. There are variations in how these differences are marked and it is more extreme in some organisations than others. At both Muhammad's and Amma's rituals such as who lights an oil lamp at the beginning of the ceremony mark hierarchical distinctions. Employee comments at Muhammad's, however, indicate dissatisfaction with this enforced participation while at Amma's women participate happily and willingly. Thus I draw the conclusion that the local owners of the companies incorporate Sri Lankan customary distinctions into ceremonies and rituals which symbolise ways of relating between hierarchically defined groups; this both contributes to their ability to manage employees and also legitimises, with more or less effectiveness, gender and class inequalities.

Control and Compliance

Controls obtain the consent of workers to the existing system of inequality, in that they can be seen as class controls that are focussed on maintaining the power of managers in hierarchical organisations. Controls also exercise power over the production process itself, trying to ensure that workers meet output goals. Muhammad's despotic inequality regime seeks to maintain the absolute power of the family members, who are top managers, to control employees, even as to how they dress or wear their hair. There are examples of the top management using their social class to manipulate state

authorities to limit unionisation and therefore employee resistance. Most of the young inexperienced women cry, swear and leave but experienced and older women argue with managers and even refuse promotions to try to retain their dignity and remain in their jobs. As a result there is high labour turnover in the company, and holding recruitment campaigns frequently in remote areas is an important method of hiring. This reminds us that the agency of women (Carswell and De Neve, 2013), in this case quitting their jobs, can affect how capitalist firms are run, to a degree, although at Muhammed's it does not mean that the owners modify their behaviour. At present the welfare society in Muhammed's is the interface between the employer and employees, but does not seem to provide employees with any real voice because it is ruled by management. At Amma's the maternalistic inequality regime gains employee compliance through the kindness of the chairwoman. This practice obtains good returns because in Sri Lanka doing people favours is highly valued, and is legitimated as a particular virtue by Buddhists and calls for gratitude in return; this is known as *Calaguna Selakeema* in Sinhala. Even labour agency at Amma's takes a different form, with some of the women employees able to assert themselves against their husbands to insist on going to work, and they have support from management in keeping their jobs against their husbands' wishes. At Amma's the Joint Consultative Committee acts as the interface between employer and employees and employees express positive comments on how the committee operates. At Rama's the pragmatic management obtain compliance by employing mainly older workers for whom the company has become a niche. There is no employee union and women's agency operates differently: younger women leave frequently and as a result management is more considerate of its older workers, whom it needs to hold onto. It is more willing to accede to their requests while the women have few other employment opportunities and enjoy the long-term friendship of other workers. These examples highlight that different inequality regimes are associated with different ways of gaining employee compliance and consent to inequalities.

What other factors affect the reproduction of inequalities in garment factories in Sri Lanka?

Going beyond Acker's (2006) focus on hierarchical inequalities, like Burawoy (1983) I am also concerned about inequality as a relationship between management and their

workers. Thus at Muhammad's the absolute power of the owners cannot be challenged, and managers are less accountable as there are no checks on their behaviours. Employees are frequently shouted at, fired, treated without respect and work under poor working conditions. Workers express concerns about being yelled at, the use of abusive language, having to work for long hours, interference with their sexual lives, delays in making payments, such as incentives, and the large number of employees who attend the sickroom daily. These concerns demonstrate the despotic nature of the regime. Further, the steepness of the hierarchy, physical facilities, forms of address and rituals and ceremonies legitimise inequalities. Thus within the despotic regime gender, class, ethnic, religious and sexual inequalities are reproduced during the working day of the factory, especially the low status of women shop floor workers.

At Amma's the chairwoman shows concern for the well-being of employees and feminine respectability, and as a result employees experience the kindness of the top management. Their personal and work related needs are attended to by management, and working conditions are far better than at Muhammad's. Within this maternalistic regime women are encouraged to remain at work despite family opposition, and managers intervene in family matters and enable women to stay at work thereby challenging patriarchy at home which modifies gender inequality. The chairwoman's kindness is highly valued by her employees. Further, being a women enables the chairwoman to get closer to women than a man would be able to, and calling the women shop floor workers 'children' strengthens the legitimacy of her maternalistic power. Although physical facilities and rituals mark status differences, the chairwoman's 'kindness' masks the power relations between employer and employee, stifling any potential challenge to the class and status hierarchy.

The pragmatic owner of Rama's pays salaries and gives the employees a fancy meal occasionally, but he is interested in another business and concentrates more on it. As a result the company is in bad shape, and employees work under unsafe and unhygienic conditions. The employees do not enjoy facilities, such as free meals or incentive payments for achieving targets. However, the company – being very small with around 40 employees and a supplier to the local market – has become a niche for older employees who find it difficult to meet the demands of factories serving foreign markets. Similarly, the hierarchy in the factory is flat, there are very few rituals, and

all the employees perform multiple job roles and work together in a more relaxed environment. Although class and gender inequalities experienced in the wider society are reproduced within the factory, the above factors tend to blur somewhat the steepness and explicitness of the social inequalities which dictate that subordinates are required to show their respect to top managers. These harmonious relations are bound to break down, though, if it becomes known that the manager and the owner have a plan to relocate the company to a rural area as a solution to the company's labour shortage.

This discussion of the three inequality regimes has shown that women experience inequalities differently within specific regimes. Now I will discuss how women manage work and family to answer the second research question:

Is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan garment factories?

To understand fully the struggles of women working in garment factories, it is essential to go beyond those organisational practices and processes that reproduce inequalities at work and study how gendered family relations affect work participation and vice versa. To understand how capitalism and patriarchy operate at this level I asked the question: 'is patriarchy recomposed, decomposed or intensified as a result of women's employment in Sri Lankan garment factories?'

My findings agree with Carswell and De Neve's (2013) study of practices and forms of agency rooted in people's everyday decision making around employment. Women's decisions to enter into or leave capitalist firms bring forward the issue of how women can work as well as manage family responsibilities within a patriarchal social structure. Accordingly, the three possible tendencies identified by Elson and Pearson (1981) in the relation between the emergence of factory work and the subordination of women as a gender, namely 'intensifying' or 'decomposing' existing forms of gender relations and 'recomposing' new forms are highlighted in my findings. Using these findings I will now discuss the presence of these three tendencies.

Young, unmarried women from the lower social class often decide to enter the labour force due to financial difficulties at home. I discussed in chapter two the high levels

of poverty in Sri Lanka, especially among youth in rural areas. Capitalist firms enable young women to challenge patriarchy by providing opportunities to work in factories but, at the same time, young women's decisions to go out to work in order to combat poverty and gain independence enable capitalist firms to obtain a pool of labour. These young and mostly unmarried women work in the lower rungs of organisations for low wages, as it is the best option for them in the face of poverty issues at home.

My findings identify some of the ways that women challenge patriarchal authority within family-households. Because women's entry into the labour force is constrained by notions of respectable femininity, young, unmarried women and married women are affected differently. Young, unmarried women face parents' disapproval if they want to enter into paid labour; especially in garment factories, due to prevailing local attitudes towards the respectability of women in the industry. These normative ideas affect young, unmarried women because they are expected to be morally pure before marriage. Some marriage proposals in local newspapers ask women from the garment industry not to respond. Similarly some women have to give up their jobs before marriage as their boyfriends refuse to marry a woman working in a garment factory due to the negative attitudes about women's respectability. Even some of the married women working in factories decide to leave employment because they have young daughters, and as mothers they think it is their duty to ensure the respectability and moral purity of their daughters. Young women are often able to overcome these constraints if their families are financially insecure as the extra income is so badly needed. This enables young, unmarried women from the lower social class to challenge their parents and go against their wishes to enter employment. Although they enter employment to combat poverty at home within the factories they are exploited and in many cases, treated disrespectfully. However, financial conditions at home outweigh concerns about respectability which makes it easier for young, unmarried women from the lower social class to go against their parents' wishes and to enter employment. Some young, middle class women also go against their parents' wishes and work in factories; not due to poverty but for personal reasons, such as wanting to be able to meet their boyfriend. Thus young, unmarried women workers from the lower social class have gained a certain amount of independence and financial stability, and are proud that they can support their families. Some even talk about the increased social status of their families being an outcome of their employment in

garment factories which mitigates attitudes about women's respectability. Accordingly, increased social status, independence and financial stability of young, unmarried women due to their employment in global garment factories can be seen as 'decomposing' patriarchy.

'Recomposing' is also present. I found that young unmarried women are still bound by parental authority within households; either sharing their finances with parents or paying for parents and siblings, but still living under the authority of the parents. Some women begin to work very early in life and pay for their parents and siblings, and continue to do so even after marriage. I also found that women were subject to parental authority, as in the case of the young woman who had been working in another company but was sent to work at Muhammad's by her mother without her consent. This was to repay the loan obtained by the young woman's deceased father while working in the company. I also found that family support is gendered with men getting more family support to find employment than women. Women are, however, supported by other women in the family in continuing employment or even, in the case of the chairwoman in the sample, to develop her business. Thus family support can be seen as 'recomposing' as well as 'decomposing' women's subordination. Similarly, patriarchal control is 'recomposed' within the factory, and for example in company hostels women's sexuality is controlled by the hostel matron.

Further, women's position at home is affected by the earnings of men in the household because patriarchal norms are the building blocks of Sri Lankan society and families operate within the patriarchal social structure. To understand the household arrangements of the respondents in my analysis I identified four different types of household arrangements, namely, living in own house, living in parental home, hostel/boarding and single parent household. The most significant finding is that household arrangements mainly coincide with participant's earnings. Men with higher earnings live in nuclear households, some even have domestic servants. In contrast, women from the lower social class are overrepresented in more complex households –a few live in extended families with even eight people living in one household. As I highlighted in chapter two, poverty is high in families where the number of family members is high. There are a few households in which women are the sole breadwinners and their husbands have no regular income. In this context I found that

married women's decision to enter or leave the labour force depends on the earnings of their husbands. When a man cannot afford to pay for the household expenses married women mostly from the lower social class enter the labour force to support their families. It is evident that men's earning power affects patriarchal authority in the household such that men with higher earnings are able to support their wives at home and they do not do any housework. In contrast the authority of men within households is reduced when men's earnings are lower, and in these circumstances women enter into employment; this is associated with men contributing to housework and listening to the opinion of their working wives. These trends can be seen as 'decomposing' women's subordination.

I discussed before the example of a manager at Muhammad's who shouted at a young woman for not wearing saree, and refused to allow a young woman HR executive to enter the office because she was late, punishing her by keeping her waiting outside for a few hours. I see these as examples of 'intensifying' women's subordination because these women were shouted at in public and one was forced to dress in conformity with ideas of respectability. I also see the control of women's sexuality by the matrons as recomposing because they are playing a patriarchal role on behalf of the capitalist firm in company maintained hostels. This is the form taken by patriarchy, and 'recomposes' women's subordination because, although the women are no longer under the control of their fathers at home, patriarchal control is re-established in a different form in the factory. The Ladder program too is similar and although it emanates from an ethical initiative of foreign buyers, it has been turned to patriarchal purposes with young women learning to accept men's behaviour and being taught how to handle it without challenging male authority.

A good example of decomposing patriarchy is provided by the chairwoman of Amma's fashions. She went against the social expectation of what a woman is, in Sri Lanka, by developing and running a business and employing her daughter. She also bargains with patriarchy by adopting a maternalistic management style which relies on femininity rather than challenging men's authority. Similarly, women at Amma's Fashions get the support and encouragement of the company to continue at work, going against the wishes of their husbands: which is another example of decomposing patriarchy in so far as it challenges patriarchal authority. The company has also given

authority to some women such as the counsellor to make decisions concerning women on the shop floor. The counsellor sometimes goes against the decisions of supervisors who are men. Thus Amma's Fashions, while it is a capitalist firm, challenges some forms of patriarchy by supporting women to be at work and giving authority to women to make decisions that men cannot challenge, rather than imposing new forms of patriarchal controls on women within the factory. At Muhammad's I found a young woman who went against her mother's wishes and entered employment so that she was able to meet a boyfriend her parents do not give consent to for her to marry. This is also an example of decomposing because she goes against the patriarchal control of her parents so that she can live in a private boarding place and continue her relationship with her boyfriend.

According to the literature it is in the Free Trade Zones that patriarchy is decomposed (Jayaweera, 2003) because women are away from their families, they live in private boarding houses and are freer from parental control. Women in factories outside Free Trade Zones mostly live with their parents and families, and can be seen as bargaining with patriarchy because although they are in factories they are still concerned to maintain a respectable reputation. For example the control by the matron in the company hostel for women at Muhammad's, and the Amma's chairwoman's awareness of young women's respectability and moral purity before marriage uphold patriarchal norms outside the family-household. I suggest, however, that even though many of the young women I interviewed are living in the parental home, they are challenging patriarchal authority as well as bargaining with it. My findings suggest a more complex picture of how patriarchal relations are affected when women work outside the home in garment factories.

Contributions to Existing Knowledge

My review of the literature on existing published research on women's work in global manufacturing, in chapter 1, and writing on women in the garment industry in Sri Lanka, in chapter 2, suggest that there are very few, if any, detailed case studies of production units in Sri Lanka. Several studies on gender and factory production in Sri Lanka consider how production is embedded in patriarchal relations, but they have been mostly conducted in Free Trade Zones (Jayaweera, 2003). Extending the study of garment factories to outside the free trade zones is something new, and has enabled

me to identify trends in women's relationships within their households, including older women workers. My research also addresses issues that have been researched previously. Some studies, for instance, have paid attention to how cultural beliefs constrain women's understanding of the structures of subordination to which they are subjected (Hewamanne and Brow, 1997). Familial recognition of young women's contributions to the family income, and how women workers gain respect from their families are the focus of another study (Hancock *et al*., 2011). Feminine respectability and sexual morality of women in the industry are widely researched (Lynch, 1999a; Hewamnne, 2003) and also women's resistance or voice (Gunawardene, 2014).

My research adds to knowledge of these issues, but I identified 'inequality regimes' as my main focus because I could not find studies that paid attention to how organisational structures and processes reproduce inequalities through the daily management of garment factories and manager-worker interactions. I took a more intersectional approach than other studies, and adopted Acker's (2006) concept of 'inequality regimes'. As I showed in the summary above, this helped to highlight the processes through which inequalities are produced including intersecting inequalities such as gender, class, ethnicity, religion, age and sexuality. My detailed and in-depth analysis of the three case study factories found different, specific inequality regimes reproducing inequalities in each organisation which is something new in research on factory work. Thus I have been able to confirm that women are active in negotiating and challenging patriarchy, but also to show the differences in the terrains they face in different companies. I also believe that mine is the first study in Sri Lanka to study women owners and managers as well as workers, and is thus the first gendered analysis of the managers of garment factories in Sri Lanka. Moreover, studying factories in the global South using Acker's (2006) concept of inequality regimes can in itself also be seen as one of my contributions. This is because almost all the previous studies on inequality regimes have been carried out in the global North, such as in the United Kingdom and/or the US, and mostly in bureaucratic organisations staffed by white collar workers, such as banks and health services but not in factories.

One way I extended the concept of inequality regime to factories is by using Burawoy's (1983) notion of 'factory regimes' to inform my analysis; in this way, I was able to pay more attention to class exploitation, which is outside of the framework

which Acker spells out, but which overlaps with it to some extent. Although most previous studies of women garment workers have been conducted in factories in Free Trade Zones that serve the international market, I was able to show how profit-oriented capitalist firms make use of the patriarchal structure of the society to obtain an output for both local and international markets outside the zones as well.

My study confirms that the ideology of respectability constrains women's entry into the garment industry. It also contributes to knowledge about the significance of young and unmarried women's (from the lower social class) financial contribution to their families, how their families gain status from women's work in garment factories, and how women's voices are enhanced at home but muted in factories. My comparison of the ability of top level male managers with higher earnings to conform to patriarchal norms as sole breadwinners, while lower level women become main breadwinners in families is also new. The comparison sets shop floor women workers' ability to make financial decisions at home, and obtain their husband's help with domestic work, in a wider class context than if they are viewed solely in the context of gender relations.

Limitations

I understand that my study has certain limitations. I studied only three organisations and interviewed only 36 people, both women and men, although I observed and spoke to many more. The three organisations were selected based on the criteria I adopted but because I used my personal contacts to gain access, the factories were all located in provinces near my home, in the West and South West of Sri Lanka. The study captures the experiences of women and men at different hierarchical levels of the three organisations all of whom discussed their experiences at work. The selection criteria I used in choosing participants is a limitation of my study, however, and has certain effects on my findings. I selected employees with work experience of one year or more in that particular organisation because I thought that if the respondents had been in an organisation for this length of time they would have more knowledge of how the factory operated and how workers responded. But this meant that I did not interview workers who move between jobs, or who perhaps were able to find better jobs elsewhere, although I ensured that I interviewed an equal number of women and men from each factory, these selection criteria resulted in more lower class women than lower class men, and more top and middle class men in the sample. This is for two

reasons: firstly, the majority of shop floor workers are women while the majority of managers are men; but, secondly, at shop floor level turnover is high, particularly amongst men, which made it extremely difficult for me to find men at that level who had been with the same organisation for a year. Thus my findings are slightly skewed. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to understand what is due to gender and what is due to class.

Although I talk about the difficulty in understanding what is due to gender and what is due to class as a methodological limitation it is also a political one. This is because due to the intersecting inequalities of gender and class it might be difficult for women themselves to connect the intersections of class and gender as the basis of their subordination as women workers. Thus it is not only hard for me as a researcher but also for the women themselves to sort out whether their confinement to lower level jobs – and in some factories abusive treatment – is due to gender or class. This reinforces the importance of intersectionality as a way of understanding how classed and gendered processes work together in practice to reinforce the inequalities that women and men experience in the garment factories of Sri Lanka.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Interview Schedule

Gender Inequality at Work: An Investigation of the Sri Lankan Garment Industry

By

Hemamalie Gunatilaka

Doctoral Candidate – Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Supervisors: Prof. Nickie Charles and Dr. Carol Wolkowitz

Introduction

I am Hemamalie Gunatilaka, a senior academic staff member of University of Sri Jayewardenepura and a PhD Student of University of Warwick in the UK. I am interested in the experience of working in garment factories in Sri Lanka. The purpose of this interview is to ask your experiences of and how you manage your work and family responsibilities. All the information collected during the interview will remain confidential. No information or detail that would identify you will be used in any way. You are free to participate or quit. If you decide to participate I request you to sign the consent form and I seek your permission to audio record the interview. During the interview at any point of time you are free to inform me that you want to stop the interview or cannot answer a particular question.

Did you get an understanding of why this interview is taking place?

Do you need further clarifications?

Do you have any questions?

1. Can you tell about your job?
    - First job or where worked before?
    - Tasks/duties/responsibilities
    - Knowledge and skills - from peers/formal training
2. Can you remember how you got selected to this job?
    - Personal experience on selection and hiring - Example
3. Who else work alongside you doing the same job?
    - Are they women or men or both?
4. Do women and men work together in your section? What jobs do they do?
    - Work station arrangements
    - Interactions with women/men
5. Who supervise you?
    - Are they women or men or both?
    - What are their strengths and weaknesses? Examples
6. Do you manage or supervise others?
    - Are they women or men or both?
    - What are their strengths and weaknesses? Examples
7. What do you think your strengths and weaknesses are?
    - As an employee/superior/peer
    - Examples
8. What are the facilities provided to you by the company?
    - Welfare facilities (transport/canteens/restrooms/counselling/childcare) and recreational activities (entertainment/cultural/religious)
    - Satisfied or not
9. What are your leave entitlements?
    - With pay/ no pay/ medical/ casual/maternity/annual
10. Do you like to get promoted?
    - Whether promoted or not
    - How many times?
    - What are your experiences in going through the promotion process?
11. What happens when new systems/designs are installed?
    - How do you get to know? Example

- How do you/others respond? Example

12. What do you do when you have a grievance?
    - Availability of mechanisms
    - Knowledge about such mechanisms
    - Example
13. According to your knowledge does the company have a trade union?
    - Are you a member?
    - What are the main activities?
14. Have you ever experienced a strike in the company?
    - When and why?
    - How was it managed?
15. Have you ever being harassed in any way?
    - Sexual /verbal harassment
    - What did you do about it? Example
16. What are your working hours?
    - Shifts
    - Overtime
17. From where do you come to work?
    - How far is it?
    - What is the mode of transport?
    - Are you being escorted by anybody? Family members/chauffer etc.
18. Did you seek permission from anyone before you came to the job?
    - From whom?
    - Permission granted easily/hesitantly
19. Is there anyone who makes your work life easy/difficult?
    - Who and how?

(May I now ask you some questions relevant to your family life?)

20. With whom do you live?
    - Nuclear/extended family
21. What are your household responsibilities?
    - Child care/caring for elders/ helping kids with their homework
    - Cooking/cleaning/washing/shopping/gardening/vehicle maintenance

- How hard are they to manage?
- When do you do these?
- Any other arrangements?

22. Is there anyone who makes your life easy/difficult?
    - Who and how?
23. What do you spend your monthly salary on?
    - Contribution by others
    - Who makes spending decisions?
    - Savings
24. Within the day/week, do you have time for you?
    - Personal/career development,
    - Leisure, social/religious involvements
25. What are your life goals?
    - Achieved or not?
    - Why?
26. Do you have any suggestions/comments to improve the conditions of your job as well as the organisation as a whole?

Can you tell me about your:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Background (urban/rural)
- Brothers and sisters
- Education
- Experience in the current job
- Marital status
- No. of children and ages
- Parents-occupation/education
- Status of living - nuclear/extended family

THANK YOU

Appendix 2 – Information Sheet

You are invited to participate in the study GENDER INEQUALITY AT WORK: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SRI LANKAN GARMENT INDUSTRY

Here is all the information you need to decide if you want to get involved

Who am I?

I am Hemamalie Gunatilaka, a PhD Student of University of Warwick in the UK. I am interested in the experience of working in garment factories in Sri Lanka.

What do I want?

I want to give you the opportunity to tell me about your work life, it's negative and positive experiences and how your working life fits in with your life at home. I want to record my conversations with you. I will always ask you if this is okay and you are always free to say 'no'. You can always step away from participation in the study, even after it has started.

Why?

I wanted to know your views and experiences regarding your work and family. This will lead to completing a dissertation which will enable me to obtain a doctoral degree. All of these activities are non-commercial. I am not offering money and I am not making money out of it. As an academic I just think your experience will be interesting to people in the academia around the globe and I would like you to share it with me.

What will I do with any information?

All the information you give will be used only for research purposes. Only I know that it was you who provided this information. In the dissertation and when I publish any research, pseudonyms will be used so that nobody will be able to identify any individual taking part in the study. Recorded interviews will be transcribed and used only for academic purposes. But anything you say in the interview that might identify you will be removed before anybody else is allowed to see it. The interviews will be kept separately from any information about you and will not be given to the media or any authorities of any kind.

I am always happy to talk to you about the research. If you have any further questions, please contact me:

Hemamalie Gunatilaka (P.D.H.D.Gunatilaka@warwick.ac.uk)

Appendix 3 – Interview Consent Form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Project Title: **Gender Inequality at Work: An Investigation of the Sri Lankan Garment Industry**

Name of Researcher: **Hemamalie Gunatilaka**

(**to be completed by participant)**

I confirm that I have understood the information sheet provided by the researcher on …….. (date), for the above project and which I may keep for my records and have had the opportunity to ask any questions.

I agree to take part in the above study and I am willing to:

- Participate in an audio recorded interview

I understand that information will be:

- Used for academic purposes (knowledge generation and dissemination)

When information from the interview is used, I understand that I will not be personally identified.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

……	**…….**	**……..**
Name of Participant	**Date**	**Signature**
……	**…….**	**……..**
Researcher	**Date**	**Signature**

Appendix 4 - Common Themes

No	Code	W	M	T
1	Early days of the job	6	7	13
2	Immediate senior leaving without notice	0	1	1
3	Mr L.	0	1	1
4	Fear and liking to accept a new job role	0	1	1
5	Ms D	1	1	2
6	Life course	14	15	29
7	Interview	15	15	30
8	Mr Y	1	2	3
9	Working in foreign garment factories	1	0	1
10	HR staff	7	9	16
11	Ladder	1	2	3
12	Mr A	3	3	6
13	Doing other's work in their absence	1	1	2
14	Accident and the job	0	1	1
15	New computer system	0	1	1
16	Help of women	3	2	5
17	Help of men	1	2	3
18	Intention to leave	3	2	5
19	Leave	16	18	34
20	Relations at work	17	16	33
21	Promotion	18	17	35
22	Designation	2	2	4
23	Trade Union	17	18	35
24	Shouting	7	8	15
25	Mode of transport	16	15	31
26	Distance from home	16	16	32
27	Parents	15	15	30
28	Siblings	15	13	28
29	Mother	12	11	23
30	Helping parents and siblings	8	7	15
31	Earnings	17	18	35
32	Savings	15	9	24
33	Further studies	4	5	9
34	Getting late	0	1	1
35	Sunday	14	15	29
36	Anxieties in the job	0	1	1
37	Sacrifice of a daughter	1	0	1

38	Love affair	6	2	8
39	Experience	13	15	28
40	Working hours/days	14	17	31
41	First job	13	10	23
42	Help of someone to get a job	3	4	7
43	Child birth	2	0	2
44	My skills	11	6	17
45	Nature of the garment industry	1	2	3
46	Skills of men	3	4	7
47	Strike	16	13	29
48	Boss	4	4	8
49	Husband	11	0	11
50	Family	11	8	19
51	Time table	8	0	83
52	Sicknesses	3	1	4
53	Future plans	14	11	25
54	Aspirations	7	6	13
55	Incentive	3	3	6
56	Welfare shop	2	1	3
57	Hostel	2	1	3
58	Friends	3	1	4
59	Father	9	8	17
60	Own decision	1	0	1
61	Family owned business	0	2	2
62	Direct Supervision	3	2	5
63	Women’s existence in the garment industry	2	1	3
64	Commitment	0	1	0
65	Harassment	4	7	11
66	Salary advance	1	0	1
67	Wife	0	15	15
68	Buyers	0	2	2
69	Owner’s responsibilities	0	1	1
70	Other business ventures	1	2	3
71	Stress	1	1	2
72	Team work	1	1	2
73	Location of the factory	0	1	1
74	Bonus	8	2	10
75	Spirituality/Religion	4	4	8
76	Frequently changing the work place	5	7	12
77	Mr R	6	4	10
78	Skills of women	6	6	12

79	Ms Dam	4	0	4
80	Facilities	13	13	26
81	Absenteeism and turnover	5	2	7
82	Madam	2	3	5
83	Mr T	1	0	1
84	Women's jobs	0	1	1
85	Work load	4	5	9
86	Women's safety in the night	2	1	3
87	Attendance allowance	1	0	1
88	Environment in a Free Trade Zone	2	0	2
89	Ruining women's lives	1	0	1
90	Conflicts	2	1	3
91	Women and sexuality	3	4	7
92	Difficulties faced by working women	1	0	1
93	Ms Tha	1	1	2
94	Satisfaction at work	4	2	6
95	Ms M	2	2	4
96	General managers	1	4	5
97	Extended working hours	0	1	1
98	Children's education	4	4	8
99	Quota system for the garment industry	1	0	1
100	Difficulties faced by a women entrepreneur	1	0	1
101	Boarding	1	0	1
102	Boy friend	4	0	4
103	Broken marriage	1	0	1
104	Caste and religion in the marriage	1	1	2
105	Change and resistance	0	2	2
106	Change in life style of sewing girls	1	1	2
107	Company image	1	3	4
108	Compliance	1	0	1
109	Composition of men and women in different jobs	2	4	6
110	Conflicts between young and old	2	1	3
111	Construction of a house	10	6	16
112	Decision making	1	2	3
113	Discrimination	1	1	2
114	Education	0	2	2
115	Effects of development to the garment industry	1	0	1
116	Experience of a young widow	1	0	1
117	Father's death	4	0	4

118	Grand children	1	1	2
119	Hiring process for male workers	1	1	2
120	Human Resource Management in Sri Lanka	0	1	1
121	Increment	2	2	4
122	Intention to stay	1	1	2
123	Lack of HRM procedures	0	3	3
124	Leader	0	1	1
125	Marriage	2	0	2
126	Men and sexuality	4	0	4
127	Men’s attitudes towards women	0	9	9
128	Men’s jobs	1	1	2
129	Moral character	1	0	1
130	Mr Az	1	0	1
131	Mr B	2	0	2
132	Ms D	1	1	2
133	Mr T	1	0	1
134	Ms S	1	0	1
135	Muslims	2	3	5
136	Nurse	1	1	2
137	Over time	5	4	9
138	Profits	0	1	1
139	Punishment	1	0	1
140	Qualifications	2	0	2
141	Retirement plan	0	1	1
142	Self- discipline	0	1	1
143	Significance of the human resource	0	1	1
144	Someone’s influence to enter into a job	0	4	4
145	Supervisor	2	2	4
146	Target	3	3	6
147	Training	5	6	11
148	Use of theoretical knowledge	0	1	1
149	What women do after marriage	8	1	9
150	Women compliance officer	1	0	1
151	Women’s attitudes towards other women	6	0	6
152	Women’s attitudes towards men	3	0	3

Appendix 5 - Codes

No	Code level 2	Code level 1	W	M	T
1	Formal relations at work	Boss	09	06	15
		Help of men at work	07	06	13
		Help of women at work	09	13	22
		HR staff	24	19	43
		Madam	29	26	55
		Mr A	21	07	28
		Mr Az	05	0	05
		Mr B	12	04	16
		Mr L	0	12	12
		Mr R	20	17	37
		Mr T	04	0	04
		Mr Tha	02	04	06
		Mr Y	09	10	19
		Ms D	04	05	09
		Ms Dam	15	07	22
		Ms M	07	16	23
		Ms S	0	03	03
		Grievance procedure	10	14	24
		Disciplinary procedure	02	02	04
		Leave	06	10	16
		Promotion	04	03	07
		Training	10	10	20
		Team work	03	02	05
2	Social interactions at work	Intention to leave	08	05	13
		Company image	07	12	19
		Men’s attitudes towards women at work	0	26	26
		Men’s attitude towards women in general	0	07	07
		Conflicts between young and old	07	09	16
		Conflicts at work	17	12	29
		Shouting	44	32	76

		Women's attitudes towards other women at work	18	0	18
		Women's attitudes towards other women in general	12	0	12
		Women's attitudes towards men at work	22	0	22
		Madam	29	26	55
		Gatherings	0	04	04
		Ms M	07	16	23
		Crying	6	2	8
		Making employees happy	4	2	6
		Favouritism	02	0	02
		Being aggressive	12	10	22
		Being friendly	37	28	65
		Friends	12	05	17
3	Provisions at work	Facilities	37	28	65
		Over time	18	09	27
		Nurse	03	02	05
		Welfare shop	04	02	06
		Bonus	21	14	35
		Attendance allowance	07	03	10
		Salary advance	03	0	03
4	Conditions at work	Absenteeism and turnover	09	12	21
		Accident and its effects on the job	0	04	04
		Doing other's work	04	05	09
		Extended working hours	0	03	03
		Getting late	03	02	05
		Satisfaction at work	14	06	20
		Sicknesses	11	06	17
		Stress	04	03	07
		Target	12	17	29
		Work load	21	17	38
		Working hours	39	31	70
		Decision making	08	06	14
		Immediate superior leaving without notice	0	04	04

		Direct supervision	17	15	32
		Harassment	21	22	44
		Change and resistance	0	08	08
		Discrimination	05	03	08
5	Non family accommodation	Hostel	12	05	17
		Boarding mistress	03	0	03
6	Ownership	Owned by Muslims	05	14	29
		Family owned business	0	04	04
		Owner's responsibilities	0	04	04
7	Career structure	Work experience	24	26	50
		Life course	38	35	73
		Promotion	35	24	59
		First job	25	37	62
		Frequently changing the work place	14	27	41
		Early days of the job	17	15	32
		Someone's influence to enter into a job	0	11	11
		Designation	18	20	38
		My skills	31	39	70
		Use of theoretical knowledge	0	06	06
		Education	22	28	50
		Qualifications	12	19	31
		Anxieties in the job	0	03	03
		Fear and liking to accept a new job role	0	04	04
8	Organisational Policies and procedures	Human Resource Management in Sri Lanka	0	07	07
		Increment	08	07	15
		Interview	31	27	58
		Leave	37	31	68
		Promotion	35	24	59
		Punishment	06	0	06
		Hiring process for male workers	05	06	11
		Help of someone to get a job	05	08	13
		Retirement plan	0	03	03

		Ladder	03	06	09
		Training	10	10	20
		New computer system	0	05	05
		Other business ventures	13	04	17
		Compliance in garment factories	09	0	09
		Lack of HRM procedures		09	09
9	Gender division of labour at work	Composition of men and women in different jobs	28	32	05
		Women's existence in the garment industry	06	04	10
		Women's jobs	20	24	44
		Men's jobs	17	12	39
		General managers	02	08	10
		Leader	0	03	03
		Supervisor	19	09	28
		Women compliance officer	08	0	08
		Difficulties faced by a women entrepreneur	08	0	08
		Difficulties faced by working women	12	0	12
		Skills of men	07	12	19
		Skills of women	22	27	49
10	Unionization	Trade union	27	22	49
		Strike	23	27	50
11	Domestic division of labour	Husband	53	0	53
		Time table	27	07	34
		Sunday	31	20	51
		Help of men at home	24	0	24
		Women's attitude towards men at home	17	0	17
12	Personal obligations	Children's education	14	11	25
		Helping parents and siblings	17	12	29
13	Domestic finances	Savings	32	21	53
		Construction of a house	21	14	35
		Earnings	34	27	61
		Expenses	28	17	45
14	Sexual relations	Men and sexuality	10	02	12

		Women and sexuality	17	22	39
		Boy friend	13	0	13
		Love affair	15	06	21
		Mode of transport	26	18	44
15	Experience in other work settings	Working in garment factories in other countries	12	0	12
		Women's vulnerability in a free trade zone	07	0	07
		Environment in a free trade zone	13	0	13
		Future plans	28	21	49
16	Global context	Location of the factory	0	05	05
		Profits	0	03	03
		Quota system for the garment industry	04	0	04
		Buyers	0	04	04
17	Women's autonomy	Child birth	06	0	06
		Women's safety in the night	07	04	11
		Own decision	03	0	03
		Aspirations	17	11	38
		What women do after marriage	13	02	15
		Experience of a young widow	08	0	08
		Moral character	07	0	07
18	Domestic relations	Family	22	19	42
		Father	35	22	57
		Grand children	04	06	10
		Husband	53	0	53
		Marriage	08	05	13
		Mother	43	31	74
		Parents	32	20	52
		Sacrifice of a daughter	03	0	03
		Siblings	25	17	42
		Wife	0	45	45
		Broken marriage	09	0	09
		Caste, social status and religion in marriage	05	06	11
		Father's Death	16	06	22
19	Faith in religions	Spirituality and religion	04	04	08

Appendix 6 - Issues Addressed

1. Why they chose the industry?
2. Why they chose the company?
3. What were they doing before getting the job?
4. Hired through personal contact/ formal process
5. Aspects covered in the selection process eg. Education/Experience
6. What did they look at when choosing the job? eg. Facilities/salary
7. Why they like the job? eg. Salary/freedom
8. What enabled them to work? eg. Education/family support
9. What did working prevent them from doing? eg. Further education/marriage
10. Have they change jobs? What are the jobs?
11. Have they changed jobs within the company? What are the jobs?
12. Process followed in changing jobs
13. What do they do tokeep their job?
14. Relations at work

Appendix 7 -Five Precepts

1. ***Panatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami***

I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures.

2. ***Adinnadana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami***

I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given.

3. ***Kamesu micchacara veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami***

I undertake the precept to refrain from sexual misconduct.

4. ***Musavada veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami***

I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect speech.

5. ***Suramerayamajja pamadatthana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami***

I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness.

Appendix 8 - Cleaning Process at Amma's Fashions

Ayubowan (May you live long)

We have seen people worshipping the sun

Some other people worshipping the steering wheel of the vehicle

Similarly we have seen some of you worshipping the sewing machine

When coming to work in the morning some of you pluck a jasmine flower and place it by the side of the sewing machine

Why do we do all these things?

No one cannot be without a job

We have to full fill all our needs with the money that we get from our job

For the schooling of our children or sisters and brothers

To look after the parents

To build a house

To get ready for the wedding

Whatever the status we are in, these objectives are common to us

That is why we have to keep the sewing machine and our work place neat and tidy

A music similar to jazz is played and the same person reads out the following and everyone begins to clean their sewing machine.

Let's begin the cleaning process from the thread stand

The music continues and the cleaning is done

Now let's clean the machine head

The music continues and the cleaning is done

Next let's clean the machine bed or the machine table

The music continues and the cleaning is done

Now let’s clean the motor box and the control box

The music continues and the cleaning is done

Next let’s clean the castor wheels or the four wheels of the machine

The music continues and the cleaning is done

I thank all of you for helping to make the cleaning process a success.

The recording ends and the day’s work begins.

Appendix 9 - Details of the Participants

Muhammad's Clothing									
Name	Job Title	Age	Gender	Eth.	Religion	Urban /Rural	Edu.	Exp.	Marrd/Single
Az	MD	48	M	Muslim	Islam	R	Up to Gr 8	20	M
Anil	Group HR Manager	56	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	BSc –Eng.	3	M
Sri	Group Technical Manager	41	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	MA	9	M
Yus	HR Manager	65	M	Muslim	Islam	U	Up to A/L	14	M
Nav	Merchandising Manager	32	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	14	M
T	HR Executive	26	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	BSc	1	M
Rak	Payroll Executive	22	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	3.5	S
Chatu	Asst. Merchandiser	21	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	1	S
Tha	Training Instructress	41	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	25	M
D	Machine Operator	28	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to A/L	1.5	M
MS	Machine Operator	22	F	Tamil	Catholic	R	Up to O/L	1	S
Ru	Machine Operator	27	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to O/L	8	S
Amma's Fashions									
Ram	Chairman	70	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to A/L	40	Wid
M	GM - Merchandising	54	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	CIMA	4	M
Hem	Cluster GM -HR	45	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	8	M
Ru	Senior. Accounts Manager -Merchandising	29	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	10	M
Ro	Secretary to Chairman	41	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	7	M
Ire	HR Executive	27	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Reading BSc (Ext)	5	S
Osh	HR Executive	27	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	B Sc. (Mgt)	2.5	M
Shri	Supervisor	42	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to O/L	10	M
Nuw	Supervisor	34	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	4	M
Nan	Machine Operator	47	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to A/L	13	M
Cha	Machine Operator	26	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	8	M
Sri	Cleaner	43	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	4.5	M
Rama's Shirts									
Jey	Owner	48	M	Tamil	Hindu	U	Up to A/L	6	M
R	Manager	44	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to A/L	6	M
Dam	Supervisor	34	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	3	S
Ro	Cutter	39	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to O/L	2	M
Sara	Mechanic	54	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Up to A/L	4	M
Lak	Store Keeper	37	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	5	M
Mad	Machine Operator	20	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	2	S
Thi	Machine Operator	46	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	A/L	4	M
Pad	Machine Operator	41	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Below O/L	6	M
Niro	Machine Operator	40	F	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Up to O/L	3	Sep
San	Ironer	22	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	U	Below O/L	1	S
Jay	Ironer	48	M	Sinhala	Buddhist	R	Below O/L	4.5	M

Bibliography

Abeyasekera, A.L. Jayasundere, R. (2015) Migrant Mothers, Family Breakdown, and the Modern State: an Analysis of State Policies Regulating Women Migrating Overseas for Domestic Work in Sri Lanka, *The South Asianist*, 4(1): 1-24.

Abeywardene, J., de Alwis, R., Jayasena, A., Jayaweera, S., and Sanmugam, T. (1994) *Export Processing Zones in Sri Lanka: Economic Impact and Social Issues*, Geneva, International Labour Office. [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms_126264.pdf (Accessed 20 February 2017).

Acker, J. (1989) *Doing Comparable Worth: Gender, Class and Pay Equity*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

_____, (1990) Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organisations, *Gender and Society*, 4(2): 139-158.

_____, (1994) The gender regime of Swedish banks. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 10(2): 117-130.

_____, (2004) Gender, Capitalism and Globalization, *Critical Sociology*, 30(1): 17-4.

_____, (2006) Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organisations, *Gender & Society*, 20(4): 441-464.

_____, (2006a) *Class Questions Feminist Answers*, USA: Rowman and Little Field Publishers, Inc.

_____, (2012) Gendered Organizations and Intersectionality: Problems and Possibilities, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31(3): 214-224.

Adkins, L. (1995) *Gendered Work: Sexuality, Family and the Labour Market*, USA: Open University Press.

Adikaram, A. S. (2014) "Good Women" and "Bad Women": How Socialization of Gendered Behavioural Norms Influences Sri Lankan Working Women's Interpretation of Sexual Harassment at Workplaces, *South Asian Journal of Human Resources Management*, 1(1): 45-65.

Adwumi, F. (1997) Lagos, Friedrich Ebert Foundation. [online] Available from: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/netzquelle/a99-06041.pdf (Accessed 17 February 2017).

Ahamedlebbe, S.M. (2011) Gender Imbalances in University Admission in Sri Lanka, *Journal of Management*, VII(1): 24-35.

Alshenqeeti, H. (2014) Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review, *English Linguistics Research*, 3(1): 39-45.

Allan, G. Graham, C. (2001) *Families, Households and Societies*, New York: Palgrave.

Amarasuriya, H. (2015) Elite Politics and Dissent in Sri Lanka, *The South Asianist*, 4 (1): 1-22.

Amarasuriya, H. Gunduz, C. Mayer, M. (2009) *Rethinking the Nexus Between Youth, Unemployment and Conflict – Perspectives from Sri Lanka* [online] Available from: http://www.enterprise-development.org/wp-content/uploads/LEO_Sri_Lanka.pdf (Accessed 20th February 2017).

Ameen, A. (2016), *Sri Lankan Anthem Sung in Tamil for First Time Since 1949*, Colombo, BBC Sinhala. [online] Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-35495567 (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Amirthalingam, K. Lakshman, R.W.D. (2010) *Conflict, Livelihood and Poverty in Sri Lanka: A Gendered Economic Analysis* [online] Available from: http://www.rahama.lk/images/LH%20batti.pdf (Accessed 2 March 2017).

Anderson, B. (2000*) Doing the Dirty Work: The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*, New York, Zed Books.

Anthias, F. and Yuval-Davis, N. (1982) *Racialized Boundaries*, London, Routledge.

Arai, E. (2006) *Readymade garment Workers in Sri Lanka: Strategies to Survive in Competition*, [online] Available from: http://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Download/Jrp/pdf/140_3.pdf (Accessed 20 February 2017).

Archive.cleanclothes.org [online] Available from: https://archive.cleanclothes.org/urgent-actions-list/687-campaign-to-support-the-free-trade-zone-workers-union-of-sri-lanka.html (Accessed 1 March 2017).

Arnado, J. M. (2003). Maternalism in Mistress-Maid Relations: The Philippine Experience, *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 4(3), 154-177.

Arunatilake, N. Omar, M. (2013) *The Sri Lankan Global Middle Class – Trends and effects on the economy*, Background paper written for the State of the Economy 2013 of the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka. [online] Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278021521_The_Sri_Lankan_global_middle_class_-_trends_and_effects_on_the_economy (Accessed 23 February 2013).

Athukorala, P. Jayasuriya, S. (2012) *Economic Policy Shifts in Sri Lanka: The Post conflict Development Challenge* [online] Available from: http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/acde/publications/ (Accessed 28 January 2017).

Atieno, O.P. (2009) An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms, *Problems of education in the 21st century*, 13: 13-18.

Attanapola, C.T. (2005) *Unravelling Women's Stories of Health. Female Workers' Experiences of Work, Gender Roles and Empowerment Relating to Health in Katunayake Export-processing Zone, Sri Lanka*, Doctoral Thesis. [online] Available from: http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:125794/FULLTEXT01.pdf (Accessed 22 February 2017).

Attanapola, C. (2006) Were They Ever 'In Place'? Sense of Place and Self Identities Among Migrant Female Export Processing Zone Workers In Sri Lanka, *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 60: 217-226.

Bair, J. (2010) On Difference and Capital: Gender and Globalization on Production, *Signs*, 36 (1), 203-226.

Bair, J., Dickson, M. A., Miller, D. eds. (2013) *Workers' Rights and Labour Compliance in Global Supply Chains*, London: Routledge.

Bamunusinghe, R. (2014) *Today's Middle Class: An Insight into the Contemporary Middle class of Sri Lanka*, The Sunday Times, (7th December, 2014) [online] Available from: http://www.sundaytimes.lk/141207/business-times/todays-middle-class-an-insight-into-the-contemporary-middle-class-of-sri-lanka-130841.html (Accessed 26 February 2017).

Bandara, A. M. N. (2014) *The New Class In Sri Lanka*, Colombo Telegraph, 25th December 2014 [online] Available from: https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/the-new-class-in-sri-lanka/ (Accessed 26 February 2017).

Bandara, J. S. Naranpanawa, A. (2015) Garment Industry in Sri Lanka and the Removal of GSP Plus by EU, *The World Economy*, 38(9): 1438-1461.

Barrientos, S. Kabeer, N. Hossain, N. (2004) *The gender dimensions of the globalization of production*, Working Paper No. 17 [online] Available from: http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.546.3625&rep=rep1&type=pdf Accessed 3 November 2017.

Barnabas, A., Anbarasu, J. D., Clifford, P. S. (2011) Prospects of Women Construction Workers in Tamil Nadu, South India. *Indian Journal of Gender Stu*dies, 18(2): 217-235.

Bartholomeusz, T. J. De Silva, C.R. (1998) *Buddhist Fundamentalism and Identity in Sri Lanka in Buddhist Fundamentalism and Minority Identities in Sri Lanka*, 1998. [online] Available from: http://www.sunypress.edu/p-2802-buddhist-fundamentalism-and-min.aspx (Accessed 25 February 2017).

Barot, R. Bradley, H. Fenton, S. *Ethnicity, Gender and Social Change*, UK: Macmillan Press Limited.

Bastian, S. (2013) *The Political Economy of Post-War Sri Lanka*, International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo. [online] Available from: https://www.scribd.com/document/149803455/The-Political-Economy-of-Post-War-SriLanka-by-Sunil-Bastian. (Accessed 18 January 2017).

Batalova, J.A. and Cohen, P.N. (2002) Premarital Cohabitation and Housework: Couples in Cross-National Perspective, *Journal of Marriage and Family* , 64(3): 743–755

Baxter, P. Jack, S. (2008) Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers, *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4): 544-559.

Behuria, A. K. (2013) Nation Building: Priorities for Sustainability and Inclusivity by Gnana Moonesinghe 2013 ed., *Strategic Analysis*, 37(1): 137-139.

Beneria, L. Sen, G. (1981) Accumulation, Reproduction, and "Women's Role in Economic Development": Boserup Revisited, *Signs*, 7(2): 279-298.

Bianchi, S.M., Sayer, L. C., Milkie, M/C. and Robinson, J.P. (2012) *Social Forces*, 91(1): 55–63,

Biyanwila, J. (2011) *The Labour Movement in the Global South: Trade Unions in Sri Lanka*, London, Routledge.

Blackburn, R. Brooks, B. Jarman, J. (2001) The Vertical Dimension of Occupational Segregation. *Work, Employment and Society*. 15(3): 511-538.

Bluhm, D. J., Harman, W., Lee, T.W and Mitchell, T. R. (2010) Qualitative Research in Management: A Decade of Progress, *Journal of Management Studies*: 1-26.

Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, *Annual Report 2013 [*online] Available from http://www.investsrilanka.com/images/publications/pdf/Annual_Report_2013.pdf (Accessed 2 April 2017).

Board of Investment in Sri Lanka *Policy Statement, BOI* [online] Available from: http://www.investsrilanka.com/images/publications/pdf/labour_sandards.pdf (Accessed 14 October 2017).

Board of Investment (2004), *Policy statement on labour standards and employment relations*, [online] Available from: http://www.investsrilanka.com/images/publications/pdf/labour_sandards.pdf (Accessed 11 March 2017).

Bobbitt-Zeher, D. (2011) Gender Discrimination at Work: Connecting Gender Stereotypes, Institutional Policies, and Gender Composition of Workplace. *Gender & Society*, 25(6): 764-786.

Borstorff, P. Arlington,K. (2011) Protecting Religion in the Workplace? What Employees Think, *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues*, 14(1): 59-70.

Bradley, H. (1989) *Men's Work, Women's Work: A Sociological History of the Sexual Division of Labour in Employment*, UK: Polity Press.

Braun, V. Clarke, V. (2013) *Successful Qualitative Research*, London: SAGE.

British Sociological Association – *Statement of Ethical Practice for British Sociological Association* - [online] Available from www.britsoc.org.uk/about/ethic.htm (Accessed 25 April 2014)

Britton, D.M. (2000) The Epistemology of the Gendered Organisation. *Gender & Society*, 14(3): 418-434.

Bryant, L. (2015) Inequality Regimes in Food Processing Industries, in Robinson, G.M. and Carson, D.A. ed., *Handbook on the Globalisation of Agriculture: Handbooks on Globalisation series*, UK:Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods*, UK: Oxford University Press.

Burawoy, M. (1979) *Manufacturing Consent, Changes in the Labour Process Under Monopoly Capitalism*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

_____,(1983) Between the Labor Process and the State: The Changing Face of Factory Regimes Under Advanced Capitalism, *American Sociological Review*, 48(5): 587-605.

_____, (1985) *The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes Under Capitalism and Socialism*, London: Verso.

_____, (2004) Another thirty years - [online] Available from: http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/Biography/Thirty%20Years.pdf (Accessed 1September 2017).

Burgess, R., Pole, C. J., Evan, K. and Priestly, C. (1994) Four Sites from One or One Site from Four? Multisite case study research in Alan Bryman and Robert Burgess, 1994 ed, *Analysing Qualitative Data*, London: Routledge.

Bygren, M. (2005) Mechanisms of Organizational Sex Segregation: Organizational Characteristics and the Sex of Newly Recruited Employees. *Work and Occupations*, 32(1): 39-65.

Calás, M. B., Smircich, L. Holvino, E., (2014) Theorizing Gender-and-Organization: Changing Times… Changing Theories? In Kumra, S., Simpson, R. Burke, R. J. (ed) *The Oxford Handbook of Gender in Organisations*, UK: Oxford University Press.

Campbell, R Ahrens, C.E. (1998) Innovative Community Services for Rape Victims: An Application of Multiple Case Study Methodology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 26(4): 537-571.

Cambridge Dictionary (2017a) [online] Available from: http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/despot (Accessed 24 September 2017).

Cambridge Dictionary (2017b) [online] Available from: http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pragmatic (Accessed 19 October 2017).

Carswell, G. De Neve, G. (2013) Labouring for Global Markets: Conceptualising Labour Agency in Global Production Networks, *Geoforum*, 44(1): 62-70.

Carter, J. (1999) Ethnicity, Gender and Equality in the NHS, in Barot, R. Bradley, H. Fenton, S. *Ethnicity, Gender and Social Change*, UK: Macmillan Press Limited.

Cerulo, K.A. (1989) Socio political Control and the Structure of National Symbols: An Empirical Analysis of National Anthems, *Social Forces*, 68 (1): 76-99.

Chapin, B. L. (2014) Childhood in a Sri Lankan Village: Shaping Hierarchy and Desire. Rutgers University Press, *JSTOR*, [online] Available from: www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7zvzq0 (Accessed 24 July 2014).

Chant, S. McIllwaine, C., (2009) *Geographies of Development in the 21st Century: An Introduction to the Global South*, UK: Edward Elgar.

Chapter 364, Holidays, (1971), Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs[online] Available from http://www.commonlii.org/lk/legis/consol_act/h364149.pdf (Accessed 25th December 2017)

Charles, N. (1993) *Gender Divisions and Social Change*,Great Britain: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Charles, N. Davies, C.A. Harris, C. (2008) *Families in Transition: Social Change, Family Formation and Kin Relationships*, UK: The Policy Press.

Choo, H.Y. Ferree, M.M. (2010) Practicing Intersectionality in Sociologic Research: a Critical Analysis, *Sociological Theory*, 28(2): 129-148.

Clean Clothes Campaign. [online] Available from: https://cleanclothes.org/about/principles (Accessed 1 March 2017).

Cockburn, C. (1991) *In the Way of Women: Men's Resistance to Sex Equality in Organisations* London: Macmillan Education Ltd.

_____, (1983). *Brothers: Male Dominance and Technological Change*, London, Pluto Press.

Collins, P.H. (1986) Learning from the Outsider Within: the Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought. *Social Problems*, 33(6): 14-32.

_____, (1989). Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection, *A publication for the Research Clearing house and Curriculum Integration Project: The University of Memphis* [online] Available from: https://www.scribd.com/doc/138130446/Toward-a-New-Vision-Patricia-Hill-Collins (Accessed 25 November 2017).

Collins, H., (2003) Discrimination, Equality and Social Inclusion, *Modern Law Review*, 66(1):16–43.

Coltrane, S. (2000) Research on Household Labor: Modelling and Measuring the Social Embeddedness of Routine Family Work, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4): 1208-1233.

Compa, L. A. (2003) *Justice for All: The Struggle for Worker Rights in Sri Lanka*, American Center for International Labor Solidarity. [online] Available from: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/reports/32 (Accessed 17 February 2017).

Connell, R. W. (1994). Gender Regimes and the Gender Order in the *Polity Reader on Gender Studies*, edited by Polity Press, Cambridge: Polity Press. Originally published in R.W. Connell (1987), *Gender and Power*, Stanford University Press.

Costello, C.Y. (2006) Book Review: Women's Work: Gender Equality vs. Hierarchy in the Life Sciences. By Laurel Smith-Doerr, *American Journal of Sociology*, 111(6): 1980-1981.

Country Briefing Paper (1999) *Women in Sri Lanka:* Asian Development Bank [online] Available from: https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/32570/women-sri-lanka.pdf (Accessed 2 March 2017).

Crenshaw, K. (1989) Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics, *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: 1(8): 139-167.

_____ (1991) Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43: 1241-1299.

Creswell, J. W. (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five Approaches* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Crinis, V. Vickers, A., ed. (2016) *Labour in the Clothing Industry in the Asia Pacific*, London, Routledge.

Crompton, R. (1997) *Woman and Work in Modern Britain*, UK: Oxford University Press.

Daily FT (19 January 2017) *EU reiterates implementation of 27 intl. conventions only criteria for Sri Lanka to regain GSP Plus* [online] Available from: http://www.ft.lk/article/592447/EU-reiterates-implementation-of-27-intl--conventions-only-criteria-for-Sri-Lanka-to-regain-GSP-Plus (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Daily Mirror (2 November 2016) *Sri Lanka could enjoy GSP Plus facility till 2023: EU* [online] Available from: http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/Sri-Lanka-could-enjoy-GSP-Plus-facility-till-EU- 118541.html (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Daily Mirror (18 May 2017) [online] Regaining GSP Plus for Sri Lankan Eports to EU Industry. Available From www.dailymirror.lk/.../Regaining-GSP-Plus-for-Sri-Lankan-exports-to-EU-Industry-p. (Accessed 16December 2017).

Daily News (29 June 2016) *SRI LANKA FORMALLY APPLIES FOR GSP+* [online] Available from: http://dailynews.lk/2016/06/29/local/86027 (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Day, S. (2012) A Reflexive Lens: Exploring Dilemmas of Qualitative Methodology Through the Concept of Reflexivity, *Qualitative Sociology Review*, VIII(I): 61-85.

Deal, T.E. Kennedy, A.A. (2000) *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*, U S A: Perseus Book Publishing LLC.

De Alwis, M. (2002). The Changing Role of Women in Sri Lankan Society, *Social Research*, 69(3): 675-691.

Degalle, M. (2006) *Buddhism Conflict and Violence in Modern Sri Lanka*, [online] Available from: https://www.academia.edu/197157/Buddhism_Conflict_and_Violence_in_Modern_

Sri_Lanka_ed._London_and_New_York_Routledge_2006_pp._xv_277_pb._2009_ (Accessed 11 March 2017).

De Munck, V.C. (1999) Capital and the Burden of Kinship: Labor Practices in a Sri Lankan Village, *Anthropology of Work Review*, 19(3): 27-32.

Department of Census and Statistics (2001) – Sri Lanka, *Census of Population and Housing 2001* [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/PDF/Population/p9p9%20Religion.pdf (Accessed 25 February 2017).

Department of Census and Statistics (2004) – Sri Lanka, *Census of Population and Housing 2004* [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/PDF/Population/p9p9%20Religion.pdf (Accessed 25 February 2017).

Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, (2013) *Poverty Indicators 2012/13* [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/poverty/PovertyIndicators2012_13.pdf (Accessed 2 March 2017).

Department of Census and Statistics (2012), *Census of Population and Housing 2012* [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2011/Pages/Activities/Reports/FinalReport/FinalReport.pdf (Accessed 24 July 2017).

Department of Census and Statistics (2017) – Sri Lanka [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/ (Accessed 25 February 2017).

Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka (2017), *Updated District official poverty lines* [online] Available from: http://statistics.gov.lk/poverty/monthly_poverty/index.htm (Accessed 10 March 2017).

De Silva, A. Welgama, M. J. (2014). Modernization, Aging and Co-residence of Older Persons: The Sri Lankan Experience, *Anthropology & Aging*, 35(1): 1-26.

Devotta, N. (2007) *Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology: Implications for Politics and Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka* [online] Available from: http://docplayer.net/21163991-Ethnic-conflict-in-sri-lanka-changing-dynamics.html (Accessed 2 February 2017).

Dewaraja, L. S. (1981) *The Position of Women in Buddhism, Sri Lanka*, Buddhist Publication Society [online] Available from: http://enlight.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-AN/an140006.pdf (Accessed 23 February 2017).

Dunaway, Wilma (Ed.) (2014) *Gendered Commodity Chains: seeing women's work and households in global production,* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press

Dwyer, D. Bruce, J. ed. (1988) *A Home Divided: Women and Income in the Third World*, California: Stanford University Press.

Economic and Social Statistics (2014), CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA, *Economic and Social Statistics, 2014* [online] Available from: http://www.cbsl.gov.lk/pics_n_docs/10_pub/_docs/statistics/other/econ_&_ss_2014_e.pdf (Accessed 3 March 2017).

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) Building Theories from Case Study Research, *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4): 532-550.

Ekanayake, E. M. S. Guruge, C. K. (2016) Social Stratification, Modernization and Restructuring of Sri Lankan Society, *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 5(2): 96-107.

Elegnius, G. (2005) *Expressions of Nationhood: National Symbols and Ceremonies in Contemporary Europe*, Doctoral Thesis, The London School of Economics & Political Science University of London, [online] Available from: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/16390523.pdf (Accessed 5 August 2017).

Elias, J. (2004) *Fashioning Inequality: The Multinational Company and Gendered Employment in a Globalizing World*, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Elson, D. (1999) Labor Markets as Gendered Institutions: Equality, Efficiency and Empowerment Issues, *World Development*, 27(3): 611-627.

Elson, D. Pearson, R. (1981) 'Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers': An Analysis of Women's Employment in Third World Export Manufacturing, *Feminist Review*, 7: 87-107.

Ermisch, J. F. Wright, R.E. (1993) Wage Offers and Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by British Women, *The Journal of Human Resources*, 28(1): 111-133.

Etherington, K. (2007) Ethical Research in Reflexive Relationships. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(5): 599-616.

Export Development Board (2014), Sri Lanka, *Performance of Exports 2014* [online] Available from: http://www.srilankabusiness.com/pdf/performance_of_exports_2014.pdf (Accessed 17 February 2017).

_____, (2015), Sri Lanka, *Who Made My Clothes – The quest for ethically produced garments* [online] Available from: http://www.srilankabusiness.com/blog/sri-lankan-sign-in-ethical-fashion.html (Accessed 11 March 2017).

_____, (2016), Sri Lanka, *INDUSTRY CAPABILITY REPORT - SRI LANKAN APPAREL SECTOR 2016* [online] Available from: http://www.srilankabusiness.com/pdf/industry_capability_reports/apparel-new.pdf (Accessed 28 February 2017).

Ezzy, D., 2010. Qualitative Interviewing as an Embodied Emotional Performance, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 16 (3): 163-170.

Feldman, S., (2009). Historicising Garment Manufacturing in Bangladesh: Gender and New Regulatory Regimes, *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 11(1): 268-288.

Fernando, W.D.A. and Cohen, L. (2011) Exploring the Interplay between Gender, Organizational Context and Career: A Sri Lankan perspective, *Gender, context and career*, 16(6): 553-571.

_____, (2013a) The Rhetoric and Reality of Home–work Harmonization: a Study of Highly Skilled Sri Lankan Women from Public and Private Sector Organizations, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(15): 2876-2893.

_____, (2013b) Exploring the Interplay Between Buddhism and Career Development: a Study of Highly Skilled Women Workers in Sri Lanka, *Work, employment and society*, 27(6): 1021-1038.

_____, (2014) Respectable Femininity and Career Agency: Exploring Paradoxical Imperatives, Gender, *Work & Organization*, 21(2): 149-164.

_____, (2016) Poachers and gamekeepers: processes of class based organisational closure and usurpation in Sri Lanka's emerging private sector, *The InternationalJournal of Human Resource Management*,1-24, Published online: 20 Jan 2016

_____, (2017) Poachers and Gamekeepers: Processes of Class Based Organisational Closure and Usurpation in Sri Lanka's Emerging Private Sector, *The InternationalJournal of Human Resource Management*, 28(15): 2184-2207

Fitzgerald, Tanya (2004). Powerful Voices and Powerful Stories: reflections on the challenges and dynamics of intercultural research. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 25(3): 233-245.

Fonow, M. M. Cook, J. A. (2005) Feminist Methodology: New Applications in the Academy and Public Policy, *Sign*s, 30(4): 2211-2236.

Fourth schedule, *The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 201*5 [online] Available from: http://www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf (Accessed 9 February 2017).

Frobel, F., Heinrich, J., Kreye, O. (1979) *The New International Division of Labour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fussell, E., (2010) Making Labour Flexible: the Recomposition of Tijuana's Maquiladora Female Labour Force, *Feminist Economics*, 6(3): 59-79.

Gamage, A. S. (2003) *Small and Medium Enterprise Development in Sri Lanka: A Review* [online] Available from: http://www.smmeresearch.co.za/SMME%20Research%20General/Conference%20P

apers/SME%20development%20in%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf (Downloaded 9th June 2017).

Gamage, S. (2007) Ethnic Conflict, State Reform and Nation Building in Sri Lanka in Crisis of State and nationin John P. Neelsen & Dipak Malik (ed) *Crisis of State and nation: South Asian States between Nation Building and Fragmentation*, , New Delhi, Manohar Publishing

Gamage, H. R., and Wickramasinghe, A. (2012) Culture of institutions and behavioural manifestations in entrepreneurship development: a South-Asian case. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 4 (7). pp. 64-79.

Gamhewage, M. I., SivashankarP., Mahaliyanaarachchi, R. P., Wijeratne, A. W. and Hettiarachchi, I. C. (2015) Women Participation in Urban Agriculture and its Influence on Family Economy - Sri Lankan Experience, *The Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 10(3): 192-206.

Ganegodage, K. R. Rambaldi, A. N. (2013) *Economic Consequences of War: Evidence from Sri Lanka*, School of Economics, Australia, The University of Queensland [online] Available from: http://www.uq.edu.au/economics/abstract/453.pdf (Accessed 18 February 2017).

Garment without guilt, *Sustainability* [online] Available from: http://www.sgs.com/en/sustainability/social-sustainability/social-responsibility-sr/garments-without-guilt (Accessed 1 March 2017).

Gaul, A. (2017) Security, Sovereignty, Patriotism – Sinhalese Nationalism and the State in Sri Lankan History Textbooks, *Ethnopolitics*, 16:2: 161-178.

Geisthorpe, L. (1992) Response to Martyn Hammersley's Paper 'On Feminist Methodology', *Sociology*, 26(2): 213-218.

Gereffi, G. (1994), "The organization of buyer-driven global commodity chains: How U.S. retailers shape overseas production networks," pp. 95-122 in: Gary Gereffi and Miguel Korzeniewicz (eds.), *Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism*, Westport, CT, Praeger.

Glucksmann, M. (1990) *Women Assemble: Women Workers and the New Industries in Inter-war Britain*, London: Routledge.

Goger A. Ruwanpura, K.N. (2016) Living Wages: Recurring Problems of Ethical Fashion in Sri Lanka? *Discover society*, 34 [online] Available from: http://discoversociety.org/2016/07/05/living-wages-recurring-problems-of-ethical-fashion-in-sri-lanka/ (Accessed 18June 2017).

Gunasekara, S. (2007). Pivoting the Centre: Reflections on undertaking qualitative interviewing in Academia, *Qualitative Research*, 7: 461-482.

Gunawardana, S.J. (2013) Rural Sinhalese Women, Nationalism and Narratives of Development in Sri Lanka's Post-War Political Economy, in Juanita Elias and

Samanthi Gunawardana (ed) *The Global Political Economy of the Household in Asia*, England:Macmillan Distribution Ltd

Gunawardana, ed. (2013). *The Global Political Economy of the Household in Asia*, New York: Palgrave MacMillian.

_____, (2014) Reframing Employee Voice: A Case Study in Sri Lanka's Export Processing Zones, *Work Employment and Society*, 28(3): 452-468.

Hale, A. Shaw, L. (2001) Women Workers and the Promise of Ethical Trade in the Globalised Garment Industry: A Serious Beginning? *Antipode*, 33(3): 510-530.

Hammersley, M. (1992) On Feminist Methodology, *Sociology*, 26(2): 187-206.

Hamin, H. Issadeen, H. C. (2016) *Unequal Citizens: Muslim Women's Struggle for Justice and Equality in Sri Lanka*, [online] Available from: http://www.musawah.org/sites/default/files/UNEQUAL%20CITIZENS%20Study%20-%20Hyshyama%20Hamin%20%26%20Hasanah%20Cegu%20Isadeen%20%28optimis%C3%A9%29.pdf (Accessed 24 July 2017).

Hancock, P. (2006) Women Work and Empowerment: A Portrait of Women Workers in Two of Sri Lanka Export Processing Zones, *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 60(3): 227-239.

Hancock, P. Middleton, S. Moore, J. (2011) A Quantitative Study of Women in Sri Lanka's Export Processing Zones , *Labour and Management Development Journal*. Vol. 12: 2-19.

Hancock, P.Carastathis,G., Georgiou, J. and Oliveira M. (2015) Female Workers in Textile and Garment Sectors in Sri Lankan Export Processing Zones (EPZs): Gender Dimensions and Working Conditions, *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences*, 38(1): 63-77.

Handy, J. Rowlands, L. (2014) Gendered inequality regimes and female labour market disadvantage within the New Zealand film industry, *Women's Studies Journal*, 28(2): 24-38.

Hankivsky, O. (1999) *Qualitative Methodology* [online] Available from: http://learningtoendabuse.ca/sites/default/files/pub_gabdois1999.pdf (Accessed 7th March) 2017.

Haq, R. (2013). Intersectionality of Gender and Other Forms of Identity: Dilemmas and Challenges Facing Women in India. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 28(3): 171-184.

Healey, J.F. (2010) *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity and Gender*, UK: SAGE.

Healy, G. Bradley, H. Forson, C. (2011) Intersectional Sensibilities in Analysing Inequality Regimes in Public Sector, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18(5): 467-487.

Hearn, J., Sheppard, D.L., Tancred, P., and Burrell, G. (ed) (1989) *The Sexuality of Organisation* London: SAGE.

Hearn, J. Parkin, W. (2001). *Gender, Sexuality and Violence in Organizations*. London: SAGE.

Hennayake, N. (2006) *Culture, Politics, and Development in Postcolonial Sri Lanka*, Oxford: Lexington Books.

Hensman, R. (2011) *Sri Lanka Women Workers and the Struggle For Labour Rights Dissenting Dialogues, 2* [online] Available from: http://divergences.be/spip.php?article2658 (Accessed 1 March 2017).

Hettige, S. T. (2004) Economic Policy, Hanging Opportunities for Youth, and the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka in Winslow, D. and Woost, M.D., eds. 2004. *Economy, Culture and Civil War in Sri Lanka*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

Herath, H. M. A. (2015) Place of Women in Sri Lankan Society: Measures for Their Empowerment for Development and Good Governance, *Vidyodaya Journal of Management*, 01(1): 01-14.

Hewamanne, S. (2003) Performing 'Dis-respectability': New Tastes, Cultural Practices, and Identity Performances by Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zone Garment-Factory Workers, *Cultural Dynamics*, 15(1): 71-101.

_____, (2006) Participation? My blood and flesh is being sucked dry": Market-based development and Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zone women workers, *Journal of Third World Studies,* 23(1):51-74

_____, (2008) *Stitching Identities in a Free Trade Zone. Gender and Politics in Sri Lanka*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

_____, (2010). Suicide Narratives and In-Between Identities Among Sri Lanka's Factory Workers, *ETHNOLOGY*, 49 (1): 1-22.

Hewamanne, S, Brow, J. (1997) 'If They Allow Us We Will Fight': Strains of Consciousness among Women Workers in the Katunayake Free Trade Zone, *Anthropology of Work Review*, XIX: 8-13.

Hodges, N., Watchravesringkan,K., Williams, M., Yurchisin,J, Karpova E and Marcketti, S (2017) Apparel Industry Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners: Exploring Gender Within a Global Context in Link, A.N., (ed.), *Gender and entrepreneurial activity*: UK, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Hoodfar, H. (1997) *Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo,* Berkley: Los Angeles.

Household Income and Expenditure Survey - 2016 Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, [online] Available from http://www.statistics.gov.lk/poverty/Poverty%20Indicators_2016.pdf (Accessed 16 December 2017).

Hrdlicková, Z. (2011) 'The Impact of the Sri Lankan Conflict on the Social Status of Tamil Women'. In: D. Madavan, G.Dequirez and E. Meyer 2011 ed.: *Les communautés tamoules et le conflit sri lankais, Paris* 2011, L'harmattan, pp. 73-104 [online] Available from:

https://www.academia.edu/11372215/The_Impact_of_the_Sri_Lankan_Conflict_on_the_Social_Status_of_Tamil_Women (Accessed 24 July 2017).

Hughes, D. (2014) Educated, Unemployed Youth in Postwar Sri Lanka: Saman's Story, Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology* [online] Available from: https://culanth.org/fieldsights/513-educated-unemployed-youth-in-postwar-sri-lanka-saman-s-story (Accessed 20 February 2017).

Hussain, B. Asad, A.S. (2012) A Critique on Feminist Research Methodology, *Journal of Politics and Law*, 5(4): 202-207.

Hutt, M. (2012) Singing the new Nepal, *Nations and Nationalism*, 18(2): 306-325.

Iacono, J.C. Brown, A. and Holtham, C. (2009) Research Methods – A Case Example of Participant Observation, *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 7(1): 39-46.

_____, (2011) The Use of the Case Study Method in Theory Testing: The Example of Steel E-Market places, *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 9(1): 57-65.

Ilyas, A.H. (2014) Estate Tamils of Sri Lanka – A Socio-Economic Review, *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 6(6): 184-191.

International Commission of Jurists (2012), *Authority without accountability: The crisis of impunity in Sri Lanka* [online] Available from: http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/50ae365b2.pdf (Accessed 11 March 2017).

Islam, G. (2009). Rituals in Organizations. A Review and Expansion of Current Theory, *Group & Organization Management*, 34(1): 114-139.

Jackson, C. Pearson, R. ed. (1998) *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender Analysis and Policy*, Oxon: Routledge.

Jagger, A. (2014) *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, USA: Paradigm Publishers.

Jayaratne, T.E. Stewart, A.J. (1991) Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in the Social Sciences: Current Feminist Issues and Practical Strategies, in Bryman, A and Burgess R. (eds) *Analysing Qualitative Data*, London: Routledge.

Jayewardene, D. (2009) *Narratives, Lamai and Female Labour: (re)narrating the untold story of HRM in Sri Lanka's apparel industry*, PhD Thesis, UK, University of Leicester, [online] Available from: https://lra.le.ac.uk/bitstream/2381/9967/3/2009jayawardenasdwphd.pdf.txt (Accessed 4 August 2017).

_____, (2014) HRM as a "Web of Texts": (Re)Articulating the Identity of HRM in Sri Lanka's Localized Global Apparel Industry, *Organization Management Journal*, 11: 289-298.

Jayewardene, K. (2009) *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists Association.

Jayasundara, N. S. (2014) Higher Education Policy in Sri Lanka: Implementation in State Universities, *Scientific Research Journal*, 2(2): 41-44.

Jayatilake, L. (2005) *The Decision Making Role of Women in the Public Sector of Sri Lanka* [online] Available from: http://www.slageconr.net/slsnet/10thicsls/abstracts/abs179.pdf (Accessed 1 March 2017).

_____, (2016) Women Managers and their Perceived Barriers for Upward Mobility in Public and Private Sectors with Special Reference to the Selected Services in Sri Lanka *International Journal of Scientific Research and Innovative Technology* Vol. 3 No. 2: 64-77

Jayaweera, S. (2003) Continuity and Change: Women Workers in Garment and Textile Industries in Sri Lanka, in *Tracking Gender Equity under Economic Reforms: Continuity and Change in South Asia*, Mukhopadhyay S. Sudharshan, R. M. 2003 eds., International Development Research Centre, Ottawa.

Jordal, M. (2014). Living Up to the Ideal of Respectability. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Implications for Unmarried Migrant Workers, Single Mothers, and Women in Prostitution in Sri Lanka. *Digital Comprehensive Summaries of Uppsala Dissertations from the Faculty of Medicine* 989. 78 pp. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. [online] Available from kth.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:542215/SPIKBLAD.pdf Accessed 25 December 2017

Josselson, R. (2007), Ethical Attitudes in Narrative Research, in Caldinin, D.J. (2007) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Kabeer, N. (2004) Globalisation, Labour Standards and Women's Rights: Dilemmas of Collective (In)action in an Interdependent World, *Feminist Economics*, 10(1): 3-35.

Kawulich, B.B. (2005) Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method, *Forum: Qualitative Research*, 6(2), [online] Available from: http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/466/996 (Accessed 28 May 2017).

Kelegama, S. (2005) *Impact of the MFA Expiry on Sri Lanka in South Asia After the Quota System: Impact of the MFA Phase- Out*, Colombo, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka in association with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, [online] Available from: http://test.antyrasolutions.com/ips/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/05_South-Asia-Quota-System-ips.pdf (Accessed 18 January 2017).

_____, (2005), Readymade Garment Industry in Sri Lanka: Preparing to Face the Global Challenges, *Asia Pacific Trade and Investment Review*, 1(1): 51-67

_____, (2009) Ready-made Garment Exports from Sri Lanka, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 39(4): 579-596.

Kelleher, F. (2011) *Women and the Teaching Profession: Exploring the Feminisation Debate*, Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO, [online] Available from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002122/212200e.pdf (Accessed 13 July 2017).

Kertzer, D. I. (1991) Household History and Sociological Theory, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17: 155-179.

Kim, J. Linda, J. W. (2016) Complex Households and the Distribution of Multiple Resources in Later Life: Findings From a National Survey, *Research on Aging* 38(2): 150-177.

King, A.J. (2007) *Deference and Disdain; Domestic Service in Post-apartheid South Africa*, Ashgate.

Kotikula, A. Solotarof, J. (2006) *Gender Analysis of Labor in Sri Lanka's Estate Sector* [online] Available from: http://paa2007.princeton.edu/papers/71572 (Accessed 10 March 2017).

Kristensen, G.K. Ravn, M.N. (2015) The Voices Heard and the Voices Silenced: Recruitment Processes in Qualitative Interview Studies, *Qualitative Research*, 15(6): 722-737.

Kurian, R. Jayawardena K. (2013). *Plantation Patriarchy and Structural Violence: Women Workers in Sri Lanka*, Conference on Bonded Labour, Migration, Diaspora and Identity Formation in Historical and Contemporary Context, June 6th – 10th, 2013, Paramaribo, Suriname [online] Available from: repub.eur.nl/pub/50375/Metis_193809.pdf (Accessed 17 October 2014).

_____ (2014) *Persistent Patriarchy*, Colombo: Social Scientists' Association [online] Available from: https://repub.eur.nl/pub/77889/ (Accessed 27 February 2017).

Lenaers, S. (2010) Differing Labour Market Positions of Ethnic Graduates in Flanders, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 29(4): 380-394.

Little, A.W. Sabates, R. (2008) Economic Globalisation, Youth Expectations and Social Class: The Case of Sri Lanka, *International Journal of Educational Development* 28: 708-722.

Lynch, C.(1999a) Good Girls or Juki Girl? Learning and Identity in Garment Factories,*Anthropology of Work Review*, 19(3): 18-22.

_____, (1999b) The "Good Girls" of Sri Lankan Modernity: Moral Orders of Nationalism and Capitalism, Identities: *Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 6(1): 55-89.

_____, (2002) The Politics of White Women's Underwear in Sri Lanka's Open Economy. Social Politics: *International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 9(1): 87-125.

_____,(2004)Economic Liberalization, Nationalism, and Women's Morality in Sri Lanka in Winslow, D and Woost, M. D., (ed) Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka, U S A:Indiana University Press,

_____, (2007) *Juki Girls, Good Girls: Gender and Cultural Politics in Sri Lanka's Global Garment Industry*, USA: Cornell University Press.

Lyons, T. (2006), *Feminist Methodology*,[online] Available from:www.addictionresearchchair.ca/wp-content/uploads/Feminist-Methodology.doc (Accessed 4 April 2017).

Ma, L. (2014) Economic Crisis and Women's Labor Force Return After Childbirth: Evidence from South Korea, *Demographic Research*, 31(18): 511-552.

Mahawamsa.org, *THE MAHAVAMSA: The Great Chronicle of Sri Lanka* [online] Available from: http://mahavamsa.org/mahavamsa/original-version/ (Accessed 9 March 2017).

Malhotra, M. and Degraff, D.S. (1997) Entry Versus Success in the Labor Force: Young Women's Employment in Sri Lanka, *World Development*, 25(3):379-394

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd ed., SAGE: London.

McCourt, W. (2000) *Finding a Way Forward on Public Employment Reform: A Sri Lankan case study*, Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester [online] Available from: http://gsdrc.ids.ac.uk/docs/open/cc99.pdf (Accessed 1March 2017).

Medagama, S. (2015) The Impact of Economic Development upon the Lives of Women in Developing Countries and Possible Alternatives with Special Reference to Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka Journal of Development Administration*, 5: 109-124.

Messarra, L. C. (2014) Religious Diversity at Work: The Perceptual Effects of Religious Discrimination on Employee Engagement and Commitment, *Contemporary Management Research*, 10(1): 59-80.

Meyer, C.B. (2001) A Case in Case Study Methodology, *Field Methods*, 13(4): 329-352.

Mies, M. (1991). Women's Research or Feminist Research: The Debate Surrounding Feminist Science and Methodology, in Bryman, A and Burgess R. 1991 ed,. *Analysing Qualitative Data* London: Routledge.

Mies, M. (1982) *The Lace Makers of Narsapur: Indian Housewives Produce for the World Market*. London: Zed.

Middleton, S. Hancock, P. Moore, J. (2011) A Quantitative Study of Women in Sri Lanka's Export Processing Zones , *Labour and Management Development Journal*, 12: 2-19.

Mills, A. J. Durepos, G. Wiebe, E. (2010) *Encyclopaedia of Case study Research*, USA: SAGE.

Mondal, S.R. (2004) *Rural Muslim Women: Role and Status*, Northern Book Centre, [online] Available from: https://books.google.co.uk/books?redir_esc=y&id=HTPrXAuDkE4C&q (Accessed 24 July 2017).

Moras, A. (2013). The Role of Maternalism in Contemporary Paid Domestic Work, *Sociology Mind*, 3(3): 248-256.

Nachmias, S. Caven, V. (2017) *Hidden Inequalities in the Workplace: A Guide to the Current Challenges, Issues and Business Solutions*, Springer International Publishing AG. Part of Springer Nature. [online] Available From: https://0-link-springer-com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/book/10.1007/978-3-319-59686-0 (Accessed 28 November 2017).

Nanayakkara, A. G. W. (2004) *Employment and Unemployment in Sri Lanka – Trends, Issues and Options*, Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/samplesurvey/emp_unemp_in%20sri%20lanka.pdf (Accessed 22 July 2017).

Neelsen, J.P. Malik, D. ed. (2007). [online] Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236886569_Ethnic_Conflict_State_Reform_and_Nation_Building_in_Sri_Lanka (Accessed 18 February 2017).

Ngai, P. (2005). *Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace*, London: Duke University Press.

Oakley, A. (1998) Gender, Methodology and People's Ways of Knowing: Some Problems with Feminism and the Paradigm Debate in Social Science, *Sociology*, 32(4): 707-731.

Öhman, G. D. Eriksson, M. (2013) Inequality Regimes and Men's Positions in Social Work, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 20 (1): 85-99.

Otobe, N. (2013). *Globalization, Employment and Gender in the Open Economy of Sri Lanka*, Geneva, Employment Sector, International Labour Office [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_212721.pdf (Accessed 26 January 2017).

Palriwala, R. (1994) *Changing Kinship, Family, and Gender Relations in South Asia: Processes, Trends, and Issues*, Leiden: Women and Autonomy Centre (VENA). [online] Available from: https://www.academia.edu/27860742/CHANGING_KINSHIP_FAMILY_AND_GENDER_RELATIONS_IN_SOUTH_ASIA_Processes_trends_and_issues_Rajni_Palriwala_WOMEN_AND_AUTONOMY_SERIES (Accessed 23 July 2017).

Pan, B.O. (2012) Postcolonial Feminist Research: Challenges and Complexities, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31(5/6): 573-591.

Parliament of Sri Lanka (2017), *Dates of Elections* [online] Available from: https://www.parliament.lk/dates-of-elections (Accessed 21 July 2017).

Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (2016), Published as a Supplement to Part II of the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of March 24, 2016, *National Minimum Wage of Workers Act No. 3 of 2016*, [online] Available from: http://www.srilankalaw.lk/gazette/2016_pdf/Act%20No.%2003.pdf (Accessed 20 May 2017).

Parry E. Tyson, S. (2011) *Managing an Age-Diverse Workforce*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Perera, M. (2000) *The Impact of Structural Adjustments on women Workers in the Formal Textile and Garment Sector in Sri Lanka, Structural Adjustment, Gender and Employment: The Sri Lankan Experience*, Geneva: ILO. [online] Available from: staging.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2000/100B09_462_engl.pdf (Accessed 8 February 2017).

Perera, M.H.E. (1987) The Changing Status of Women in Sri Lanka, *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 17(1): 1-23.

Perera, N. Rathnayake, M. (2013) *Sri Lanka's Missing Mothers* – A working paper on the effects of mother migration on children [online] Available from https://srilanka.savethechildren.net/sites/srilanka.savethechildren.net/files/library/Annexe%201-Missing%20Mothers.pdf (Accessed 1 February 2017).

Phal, J. (1989) *Money and Marriage*, London: Macmillan.

Pinto, L. (2015) *Being a Christian in Sri Lanka: Historical, Political, Social and Religious Considerations*, USA: Balboa Press[online] Available from: https://www.amazon.com/Being-Christian-Sri-Lanka-Considerations/dp/1452528632 (Accessed 3 March 2017).

Poverty in Sri Lanka 2006/2007 - Based on Household Income and Expenditure Survey - 2006/07- Department of Census and Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Sri Lanka [online] – Available from http://www.statistics.gov.lk/poverty/reportnew-Final.pdf (Accessed 17 December 2017).

Prasanna, R.P.I.R. Kuruppuge, R.H. (2013) *General Wage Situation of Apparel Industry Workers in Sri Lanka*, ASIA FLOOR WAGE ALLIANCE [online] Available from http://asia.floorwage.org/resources/wage-reports/general-wage-situation-of-apparel-industry-workers-in-sri-lanka (Accessed 17 February 2017).

Ramazanoglu, C. (1992). On Feminist Methodology: Male Person Vs Female Empowerment, *Sociology*, 26(2): 207-212.

Ramazanoglu, C. Holland, J., (2002). *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*, London: SAGE.

Ramesh, R., Rasnayake S. Kamalarathne. T. (2013) Women's Rights in Sri Lanka: An inquiry into the Rights of Plantation Women, *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 2(7): 11-24.

Ranaraja, S. (2013) *Emerging Trends in Employee Participation in Sri Lanka*: Working Paper, Industrial and Employment Relations Department (DIALOGUE) ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---dialogue/documents/publication/wcms_206005.pdf (Accessed 7 December 2017).

Rao, J. (2010) The Caste System: Effects on Poverty in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, *Global Majority E-Journal*, 1(2): 97-106.

Rapley, T. J. (2001). The Art (fullness) of Open-Ended Interviewing: Some Considerations on Analyzing Interviews, *Qualitative Research*, 1(3) 303-323.

Rathnasooriya,S.K. and Jayatilake, L.V.K (2016) Impact of Job Related Factors on Turn over Intention of Operational Level Employees in Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka, Journal of *Business and Management* ,18(12): 39-46

Reeves, S. Kuper, A. Hodges, B.D. (2008) Qualitative research methodologies: ethnography[online] Available from: http://www.allgemeinmedizin.uni-jena.de/content/education/equip_summer_school/equip_2009/e4100/2008-010_Reevesetal_Qualitativeresearchmethodologies-ethnography.pdf (Accessed 7 March 2017).

Revision of the Salaries in Public Service (2016) Available from: http://www.pubad.gov.lk/web/eservices/circulars/2015/E/03_2016(e).pdf (Accessed 22nd May 2017).

Riach, K. (2011) Situating Age (In)equality within the Paradigm and Practices of Diversity Management. In: Parry E. and Tyson, S., eds. *Managing an Age-Diverse Workforce,* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Risseeuw, C. (1992) Gender, Kinship and State Formation: Case of Sri Lanka under Colonial Rule, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 27(43/44): WS46-WS54.

Riswan, M. (2014) A Historical Survey of Social Class and Caste System in Sri Lanka, *KALAM International Journal of Faculty of Arts and Culture*, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka VIII(1): 40-47.

Ruwanpura, K. (2000) *The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Female Workers in the Formal Textile and Garment Sector in Sri Lankain Structural Adjustment, Gender and: The Sri Lankan Experience* [online] Available from: http://staging.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2000/100B09_462_engl.pdf (Accessed 10 February 2017).

Ruwanpura, K.N. (2004) *Quality of Women's Employment: A Focus on the South*, International Institute for Labour Studies Geneva [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_193627.pdf (Accessed 3 March 2017).

_____, (2011). Women Workers in the Apparel Sector: a Three Decade (R)-evolution of Feminist Contributions?, *Progress in Development Studies*,11(3): 197-209.

_____, (2013) It's the (Household) Economy, Stupid! Pension Reform, Collective Resistance and the Reproductive Sphere in Sri Lanka, in Elias, J and Gunawardene, S. 2013 eds. *The Global Political Economy of the Household in Asia: An Introduction*, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

_____, (2015) The Weakest Link? Unions, Freedom of Association and Ethical Codes: A Case Study From a Factory Setting in Sri Lanka, *Ethnography*, 16(1): 118-141.

_____, (2016) Garments Without Guilt? Uneven labour geographies and ethical trading – Sri Lankan labour perspectives, *Journal of Economic Geography*, 16(2): 423-446.

Ruwanpura, K. N. Wrigley, N. (2010) The Costs of Compliance? Views of Sri Lankan apparel manufacturers in times of global economic crisis, *Journal of Economic Geography*, 11(6): 1031-1049.

Saifuddin, S.M., Dyke, L.S. & Rasouli, M. (2013) Gender and Careers: A Study of Persistence in Engineering Education in Bangladesh. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 28(4): 188-209.

Salary Explorer, Salaries in the private sectorin Sri Lanka, (2016) [online] Available from:http://www.salaryexplorer.com/best-paying-jobs.php?loc=204&loctype=1#sthash.rx4hJIUR.dpuf (Accessed 22May 2017).

Salzinger, L. (2003) *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories*, Berkley: University of California Press.

Sarantakos, S. (1993) *Social Research*, Australia: Macmillan Education Australia PTY Ltd.

Sarveswaran, A. (2000) Industrial Law: A Critique of the Industrial Law of Sri Lankan in the Context of Foreign Investment, *Bar Association Law Journal of Sri Lanka*, VII(II): 1-6.

Savchenko, Y. Acevedo, G.L. (2012) *Female Wages in the Apparel Industry Post - MFA The Cases of Cambodia and Sri Lanka*, Policy Research Working Paper, [online] Available from: https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813 -9450-6469 (Accessed 22 February 2014).

Semasinghe, W.M. (2017) Women's Labor Force Participation in Sri Lanka: An Inquiry into the Factors Influencing Women's Participation in the Labor Market, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 7(3): 184-187.

Shop and Office Employees Act, *Shop and Office Employees Act of 1954; 67 of the Factories Ordinance* [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/1350/Shop%20and%20Office%20Employees%20Act.pdf (Accessed 4 June 2017).

Silva, K. T. (1994) The Transition from Welfare State to Market Economy and its Effect on Social Development in Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences*, 17(1&2): 115-136.

_____, (2005) *Kulaya, Panthiya Saha Lankawe Samaaja Getum* (Caste, Class and Social Conflicts in Sri Lanka), Sri Lanka: Visidunu Printers.

Silva, K. T. Sivapragasam, P. P. Thanges, P. (2009) *Caste Discrimination and Social Justice in Sri Lanka*, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, III(6) [online] Available from: http://idsn.org/wp-content/uploads/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Publications_from_network/Caste_discri

mination_and_social_justice_in_Sri_Lanka__IIDS_working_paper_.pdf (Accessed 23rd February 2017).

Silva, N. (2000) Women, Culture and Nation-building: Contemporary Sinhalese and Bengali theatre, *Contemporary South Asia*, 9(3): 339-353.

Silverman, D. (2011), *Interpreting Qualitative Data: A Guide to the Principles of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed, London: SAGE.

Sireeranhan, A. (2013) Participation Of Family-Women In Agricultural Production: A Case Study Of Jaffna District, Sri Lanka, *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development* Available from: iste.org/Journals/index.php/JEDS 4(13): 143-147.

Smith, A.C.T. Stewart, B. (2011) Organizational Rituals: Features, Functions and Mechanisms, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13: 113-133.

Smits, S. J. (2011) Contemporary Sinhala-Buddhist Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Relevance of a (Neo-) Marxist Interpretation, *The Open Area Studies Journal*, 4: 73-85.

Sonoda, H. (2008) *Sri Lanka: Small & Micro Industries Leader & Entrepreneur Promotion Project (I) (II)* [online]Available from: https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/oda_loan/post/2008/pdf/e_project08_full.pdf (Accessed 11 March 2017).

Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2004, Department of Census and Statistics, [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/samplesurvey/annual%20report-20041.pdf (Accessed 10 February 2007).

Sri Lanka *Labour Force Survey - Annual Report 2014*, Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, [online] Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.lk/samplesurvey/LFS_Annual%20Report_2014.pdf (Accessed 10 February 2017).

Statistics on labour migration within the Asia Pacific region, 2015. Red Cross Red Crescent Manila Conference on Labor Migration 2015, [online] Available from:

http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Asia-pacific/201505/Map_Infographic.pdf (Accessed 10 March 2017).

Tagchundarpa, A. H. (2015) *Can Women Become Leaders in the Buddhist Tradition?* Berkley Forum [online] Available from: https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/forum/can-women-become-leaders-in-the-buddhist-tradition (Accessed 3 March 2017).

Tharmaseelan, N. (2007) Tertiary Education in Sri Lanka: Issues and challenges, *Bulgarian Journal of Science Education and Policy*, 1(1): 173-190.

The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (2015) *Second and third schedules*, [online] Available from: http://www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf (Accessed 9 February 2017).

The Women and Media Collective Colombo (2010) *Sri Lanka Shadow Report: To the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* [online] Available from: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngo/WMD_SriLanka48.pdf (Accessed 3 March 2017).

Thripitakaya.org, *ථේරවාදත්‍රිපිටකය* [online] Available from: http://thripitaka.org/view/sp/sp12/94 pp 57 -58 (Accessed 15 February 2017).

Tidball, S. (2011) *Migration of Sri Lankan Women as House to the Middle East*, Third Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Human Trafficking [online] Available from: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=humtraffconf3 (Accessed 1 March 2017).

Tilakaratne, W. M. (2006) *Phasing out of MFA and Emerging Trends in the Ready Made Garment Industry in Sri Lanka, in Ready Made Garment Industry in the Post MFA Era: The Case of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka,* in Murayama, M., 2006 ed., Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organisation Joint Research Program Series, No. 140 at[online] Available from: www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Jrp/ (Accessed 17 February 2017).

Veblen, K. K. (2010) *National Identity in Canadian Music Education in Patriotism and Nationalism in Music Education*, in Herbert, D. Kertz-Welzel, A. ed. 2010. Patriotism and Nationalism in Music Education, USA: Routledge.

United Nations – Female Labour Force Participation (2010) – [online] Available from: www.un.org/esa/population/publications (Accessed 27 October 2017).

United Nations General Assembly (2011), Third Committee, October 2011, Poverty, Negative Effects of Globalisation Highlighted, as Third Committee Concludes *Discussion of Social Development Issues* [online] Available from: http://www.un.org/press/en/2001/gashc3631.doc.htm (Accessed 24 November 2017)

Venugopal, R. (2015) Democracy, development and the executive presidency in Sri Lanka. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(4): 670-690.

Villarreal, A. Yu, W. (2007) Economic Globalization and Women's Employment: The Case of Manufacturing in Mexico, *AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW*, 72: 365-389.

Vishwanath, T. Yoshida, N. (2007) *Poverty Maps in Sri Lanka Policy Impacts and Lessons [Online]* Available from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPGI/Resources/342674-1092157888460/493860-1192739384563/10412-12_p225-240.pdf (Accessed 2 March 2017).

Vithanage, D. S. (2015) *Understanding the Nature and Scope of Patriarchy in Sri Lanka: How Does it Operate in the Institution of Marriage?* A thesis submitted to the St. Cloud State University, [online] Available from: http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=socresp_etds (Accessed 11 March 2017).

Wacjman, J. (1998) *Managing Like a Man*: *Women and Men in Corporate Management*, Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Walby, S. (1986) *Patriarchy at Work*, UK: Polity Press.

_____, (2009) *Globalization and Inequalities: Complexity and Contested Modernities: Regimes of Complex Inequality*, London: SAGE.

Weerakoon, D. Thennakoon, J. (2006) *Trade Liberalization in Sri Lanka: A Case Study of the Textile Industry*, Institute of Policy Studies: Colombo.

Wickramasinghe, M. Jayatilaka, W. (2006) *Beyond Glass Ceilings and Brick Walls – Gender in the Workplace*, International Labour Organization [online] Available from: http://www.ilo.org/public//english/region/asro/colombo/downloads/publications/beyond.pdf (Accessed 19 February 2017).

Wickramasinghe, N. (2009) After the War: A New Patriotism in Sri Lanka? *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 68(4): 1045-1054.

Widger, T. (2015). Philanthronationalism: Junctures at the Business–Charity Nexus in Post-war Sri Lanka, *Development and Change*, 47(1): 29-50.

Wijetunge, C.S. Saito, K. (2017) Evaluating the Fertilizer Subsidy Reforms in the Rice Production Sector in Sri Lanka: A Simulation Analysis, *Advances in Management & Applied Economics*, 7(1): 31-51.

Wijetunga, L. (1997) *Industrial Relations in Export Processing Zones: The Experience of Sri Lanka in Labour Relations in Export Processing Zone*s, in Adewumi, F. Labour Relations in Export Processing Zones Challenges for Organized Labour, 1997 ed., Lagos: Freidrich Ebert Foundation.

Wiles, R.,Crow, G., Charles, V and Heath, S (2007) Informed Consent and the Research Process: Following Rules or Striking Balances? *Sociological Research Online*, 12 (2), [online] Available from: http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/2/wiles.html (Accessed 9 June 2017).

Williams, S., Bradley, H., Devadason, R. and Erickson, M. (2013) *Globalisation and Work*, UK, Polity.

Williams, C. L. Muller, C. Kilanski, K. (2012) Gendered Organisations in the New Economy, *Gender and Society*, 26(4): 549-573.

Wilkinson, S. U. E. (1988) The Role of Reflexivity in Feminist Psychology, *Women's Studies International Forum*, II (5): 493-502.

Wobbe, T. (2003) From Protecting to Promoting: Evolving EU Sex Equality Norms in an Organisational Field. *European Law Journal*, 9(1): 88-108.

Wolf, D, L. (1990) Daughters Decisions and Domination: An Empirical and Conceptual Critique of Household Strategies, *Development and Change*, 21: 43-74.

_____, (1991) Female Autonomy, the Family and Industrialisation in Java in Blumberg, R. (ed.) *Gender, Family and Economy*, London: SAGE.

Wolfinger, N.H. (2000) On Writing Field Notes: Collection Strategies and Background Expectancies, *Qualitative Research*, 2(1): 85-95.

Yancey Martin, P. Collinson, D. (2002) Over the Pond and Across the Water': Developing the Field of `Gendered Organizations', *Gender, Work and Organization*, 9(3): 244-265.

Yin, R.K. (1994), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 2nd ed., London: SAGE.

Zucker, D.M. (2009) How to Do Case Study Research, *Teaching Research Methods in the Humanities and Social Sciences 2.* [online] Available from: http://scholarworks.umass.edu/nursing_faculty_pubs/2 (Accessed 21 March 2017).